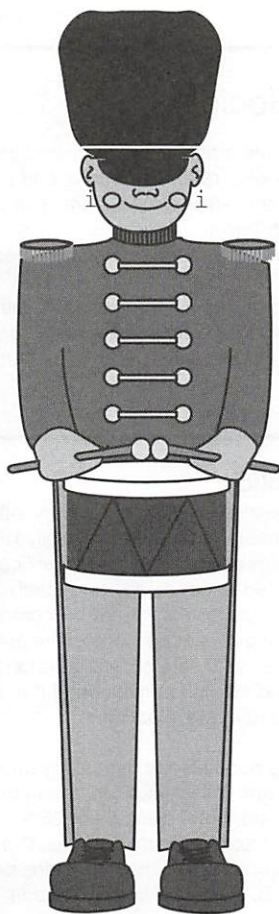




## British military records

by Lark Szick

Family historians who can trace their roots back to an ancestor who served and fought any of the many wars throughout the world since the 1700s are often amazed and gratified by the amount of biographical data contained in the records of their military service. These records often contain details of their birth, residence and physical aspect, and in addition, details of their service, conduct and other often unknown information. This article is intended as an introduction to this, another vast and challenging adventure in research.



Most of the record types noted in this article are available at the Public Record Office in Kew, Surrey (the Public Record Office holding the majority of the military records), and many are available on microfilm through the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, or at one of its 1,500+ branch libraries or Family History Centers worldwide.

Generally, an army's human components are viewed on two levels; officers and enlisted men. This division continues in the record keeping of biographical data. Of course, there were far more enlisted men than officers, and officers' records are usually more complete than those for those in the lower ranks, but even the records for the enlisted men contain quite a bit of information and will be useful for any family historian. Most of the records for the British military are arranged along regimental lines, so the usual starting point is to determine which regiment your ancestor belonged

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# CHINOOK

The Journal of the Alberta Family Histories Society  
volume 17, number 4, summer 1997

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## The Alberta Family Histories Society

The society is a non-profit organization formed in 1980 to promote and encourage an interest in family history research. The activities of the society are funded completely by membership fees, fund-raising projects and donations from individual members.

Among the purposes of the society are:

- to encourage accuracy and thoroughness in family histories and in genealogical research
- to encourage and instruct members in the principles, methods and techniques of genealogical research and compiling family histories

- to assemble a library of family and local histories, genealogical guides, handbooks, reference books and materials which may assist the members, and which shall be available to them

- to publish bulletins, booklets, books or other documents and to make these available to members and others on terms determined by the society

- to establish friendly relations with other societies involved with family history and genealogy to promote common interests, and
- to present seminars and workshops that will be helpful to members.

### Membership:

Membership in the society is open to anyone interested in family history and genealogy, and may be obtained through the membership secretary of the society at PO Box 30270, Station B, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2M 4P1. Membership fees are due 1 September each year.

Membership fees (1997-98):

Individual \$30  
Family \$35  
Individual (senior) \$25  
Family (seniors) \$28  
Institutional \$35

Overseas: add \$8 (Cdn) for airmail.

USA members: Please pay in US funds.

Life memberships are available.

Meetings are held on the first Monday of every month (second Monday if first is a holiday). Beginner classes are at 6:45 pm and general meeting starts at 7:30 pm. Call 686-4280 for information.

### Editorial policy:

Chinook is published in October, January, April and June, and is distributed to all members of the Alberta Family Histories Society. The editor welcomes articles and news items for publication from members or from anyone interested in genealogy and family history. Articles should be typed or preferably in text format on computer disk. We assume no responsibility for errors or opinions of the authors. All materials submitted will be treated with care but will be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope of the appropriate size, or if other arrangements are made in advance.

Advertisements pertaining to genealogy are eligible for inclusion in the journal. Rates are: full page, \$55; half page, \$30; quarter page, \$15; and business card, \$6. A discount of 25% is offered for any advertisement placed in four consecutive issues. Correspondence, articles and advertising or submissions may be addressed to the editor at PO Box 30270, Station B, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2M 4P1.

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Editorial —

## Who could ask for more?

by Doug Stobbs, editor

While we as a society..... distinctly so since 1980 are about to begin a new chapter in our history, it may prove interesting to pause for a bit and consider the road we've travelled thus far.

The earliest AFHS meetings were held in a school (even the old-timers can't agree which one) nevertheless it was somewhere on 17th Avenue SW. These were the formative years... garage sales were used as fundraising events and it's recalled by some that even in blizzards, these were often fun.

Facilities at the school were rapidly out-grown; the next home for this distinct group was the Masonic Hall in Knob Hill District. Just finding this hall was a test of anyone's research skills as the streets on which it stands were severed for the widening of Crowchild Trail; approaches were only from the North and East. This proved too much for some, however membership did continue upward.

The library grew too and in those pioneer times, the books and journals were kept in boxes locked in cupboards. During meetings these containers were lifted onto tables and then put securely back afterwards. Our library staff has never been in as robust condition since.

Finally, the ever-growing numbers at the meetings dictated another move and this brought us to Knox Church in 1990.

About 1986 the first seminar was held. This was in the old Calgary Herald Building... downtown. This was a mere shell of a building then as all the presses and other equipment had been removed.. but the price was right. Attendance that year was about 40 (the Computer SIG easily attracts more now, every month).

Seminars have been a major annual event since and it is in the memory of many 'new members' that these were held in Parkdale United Church in 1987,'88 and '89. In 1990 the venue changed to S.A.I.T. and was highlighted by a group of troubadours from Salt Lake under the command of a kilted pseudo-Scot named Kitzmueller;

attendance that year hit the magic 200.

This was followed by a series of seminars at the University of Calgary (1991 to 1995) and finally to the Crossroads Hotel which is in almost everyone's memory as being amongst the best ever.

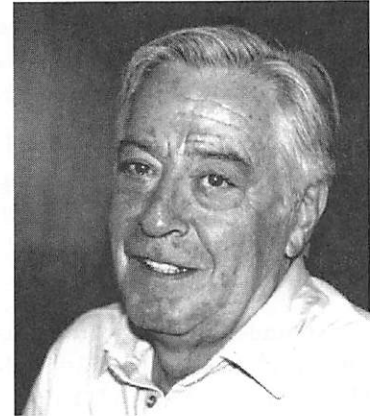
During the past year the AFHS library has begun to burst out of the cupboards; the regular monthly meetings are attracting an average of 140 and these factors have led to the decision to move.... start a new chapter so to speak. There has been growing concern too about the Fire Marshall blowing a whistle just before 'Brag Time'.

This chronicles the physical side of this Distinct Society. It is a pleasure to know there are still members who were there through all those steps and more than that, most held a myriad of positions on committees etc. along the way. Existing members who hold the 'Century' series of membership numbers are: Hazel Brown, Ross Campbell, Florence Denning, Marj. and Sheldon Gibson, Lorna Laughton, Leota McAlpine, Irene Oickle, Pat Rankin, Jan Roseneder, Isobel Schiedel, Gladys Struble, Gisele Tremblay, Nina Williamson and Eleanora Wilson. Give them all a big hand next time you see them.

So, Southminster United Church will probably be our new home by September. There's a lease being discussed at this time and having that signed will make it official. This will serve our growing membership admirably; there's a bright airy meeting room which will hold hundreds and a separate large cavern for the peripatetic Library. Free parking, kitchen alongside, bright wash-rooms. Could we ask for more?

Watch for announcements.... Mail, Internet, phone, TV...

See you there..... mark it down..... Monday, September 8th, 1997.



Alberta Family Histories Society — A distinct society since 1980



to. If this is already known, the regimental files can be examined directly. However, If you don't know which regiment your officer / ancestor was assigned to, a good place to begin is with the Army Lists.

**Army Lists.** The first official Army List was published in 1740, and they were published annually from 1754 through 1878, then quarterly from 1879 through 1922. Since 1939 they have been classified, and thus not available to the general public.

Earlier commissions can be traced using Charles Daltons' English Army Lists & Commission Registers, 1661-1714 and his George I's Army, 1714-1727. The Army Lists begin with a list of the officers by rank, generals through lieutenants, giving their name and the date they received their commission to that rank. Following this the officers and their assignments are shown by regiment, beginning with the cavalry and following in order through the regiments of foot. The regiment listings include the number and name (or names) of the regiment, the names and ranks of the officers, the dates of their commissions in the Army and their assignment to that regiment.

Beginning in 1766 these Army Lists are indexed, and beginning in 1798 they include the location of the regiment at that time. These Army Lists are available at the Public Record Office (in War Office (W.O.) files 64, 65 and 66), or at the Family History Library.

**Regimental Records of Service.** Once the regimental assignment has been established, the Records of Officers' Services (W.O. 76) can be searched for data on your ancestor. The earliest of these regimental records begins in 1771, the last ending in 1919. Again, these service records are available at the Public Record Office in Surrey, at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, or at one of the LDS Family History Centers. These files are arranged by regiment, with an alphabetic index in the front of each volume.

After the index come lists of succession for the offices in the regiment, giving the name of the officer, the exact date of his appointment, his age in months and years at the time of his appointment, his country of origin, the date of his first commission in the Army. Columns are also available for the name of the officer he replaced and why, with remarks on the officer. This section is followed by the Statements of Service for each of the officers. This is the heart of the officers' service file. Although the exact contents of each file will vary from regiment to regiment, they generally contain more information as time goes on.

The Statement of Service from volume 61, for the Surrey (70th) Regiment of Foot covers two pages and contains a wealth of information on the officer. His full name is

given at the top, along with his birth date and place, regimental assignment, and his age at the time of his entrance to the Army. Information on the ranks he attained, pay, regimental assignments, instances of distinguished service, medals, wounds, and foreign service are all provided in some detail. Genealogists will especially appreciate the sections of the Statement form devoted to the details of his marriage, and the names and birth data concerning the officer's legitimate children.

Certificates of birth, marriage and death for both officers and members of their families can also be found in War Office file number 42.

Using the details from the service record, a family historian can go directly to the appropriate registers of the parish in which the officer was born for information on his parentage. If the officer was married, the service record's indications of the marriage date and place, as well as the birth information on his children, will prove equally valuable.

**Enlisted Men's Service Records.** As with the service records of officers who served in the British Army, the key to locating the record of an enlisted man is the name of his regiment. Occasionally the regiment in which an ancestor served is known from the outset, but all too often the only facts known about an ancestor's service are when and where he served. Even with these sparse facts it is often possible to pin down the one regiment, or at most, a handful of regiments that were in service in that particular place and time.

**Determining the Regiment.** There are several books devoted to the subject of the regiments and corps of the British Army, but the genealogist may find particularly useful a trio of books discussing the history and accoutrements of the British regiments. "The Regimental Records of the British Army", by John S. Farmer contains information on the names and nicknames of the regiments, their uniforms, badges, dates of formation, honours attained by the troops, and lists of their principal campaigns and battles. "A Guide to the Regiments & Corps of the British Army", by J.M. Breton includes much of the same information, although the information on battles and campaigns is sketchier. Closer to Farmer's volume is Arthur Swinson's "A Register of the Regiments & Corps of the British Army". As with the other two books, this one is organized by precedence of the corps, beginning with the cavalry regiments and proceeding through the foot guards and regiments of foot. Again, the regimental listings include both the formal titles and nicknames borne by the regiment, a chronological list of the major campaigns and battles fought, and a short history of the regiment.

To locate the proper regiment, you begin with what is known about your ancestor. This could be the fact that he took part in a certain battle, or wore a certain type of uniform, or belonged to a regiment with a certain nickname. Then, you go through the regimental listings seeking for one (or more) that would confirm the facts as you understand them. For example, if your ancestor was posted to Gibraltar in the early part of the 18th century, he may have served in the 30th (or Cambridge) Foot Regiment. This regiment was stationed on Gibraltar during 1704 and 1705; at the time was known as Colonel Thomas Sanders Regiment of Marines. Nicknames included The Triple X's and The Three Tens, both of which were obviously based on the number of the regiment.

**Station Returns.** Another source of information on regiments that can be useful if you already know that your ancestor was stationed in a particular place at a particular time is the collection of Station Returns (W.O. 17) located in the Public Record Office. These Returns are yearly lists of the disposition of army regiments, beginning in 1759. If, for example, you know that your ancestor was in Egypt in 1882, these lists can be searched for a list of the regiments stationed in Egypt at that time. Once you have determined the regiment in which your ancestor served, you will want to search two sets of records; the Muster Rolls and the Regimental Description Books.

**Muster Rolls.** The Muster Rolls are also deposited in the Public Record Office. These lists were compiled quarterly, and are arranged in volumes covering a twelve month period. Although these volumes do not contain as much personal information as the Regimental Description Books, they are helpful in establishing the dates of enlistment and discharge (or death). The first entry in these rolls for each soldier should indicate his age, while the last entry should show his birthplace, non-military occupation, and the date of his enlistment.

There are several series of these Muster Rolls, bearing War Office (W.O.) numbers 10 through 16. The three most comprehensive are; W.O. 10, containing Muster Rolls for the artillery for 1708-1878, W.O. 11, Muster Rolls for engineers for 1816-1878, and W.O. 12, the general series, with Muster Rolls for the cavalry, foot guards and regiments of foot for 1732-1878.

**Regimental Description Books.** The Regimental Description & Succession Books (W.O. 25) are available at the Public Record Office in Surrey, with microfilm copies being available at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City or at Family History Centers. The latest dates are 1756 and 1900; there is some variation between regiments. Volumes 266 through 688 cover the regular army

regiments, with a separate file of bundles for engineers, and another set of bundles for officers.

These Description Books begin with an index (using the first letter of the surname only) and follow with the entries in chronological order. The entries contain quite a lot of detail, filling 39 columns across two pages. Each entry begins with the full name of the soldier, the number of the company in the regiment he was assigned to, his height (both at the time of his enlistment and at age 24), and his age (in years and days) at the time of his enlistment. The next four columns describe the soldier's complexion, the colour of his eyes and hair, the form of his visage, and whether he had any physical marks. The country or town and parish of his birth are given (but not the date); any occupation he had outside of the military is noted. The date, place, period of enlistment are all given, along with the name of the person by whom the soldier was enlisted. Details of any previous military service, dates of promotion are also noted, details of desertion, transfers, discharges, and if applicable, where and when the soldier died. The final column is reserved for comments on the soldier's character and conduct while in the service of his country.

The mobility indicated in these books can be amazing. An example is John Kennedy, a brass-foundry worker who was born in Dublin. In 1808 at the age of 19, John Kennedy enlisted in the 1st Foot Regiment on the Isle of Wight after serving eight months with the 17th Light Dragoons (later known as the 17th Lancers). He served in the seventh company of The (Royal) 1st Regiment of Foot until 1831, when he was pensioned at York. Presumably he also accompanied the regiment during its tours of duty in Europe, Iberia, America and India. In short, service records for the enlisted man can provide far more than the bare facts of his birth, enlistment and discharge from service or death. They can also give an accurate personal description of his physical condition and character, and chronicle both his military service and his civilian occupation. For the descendant of a British soldier they are invaluable.

**Pension Records.** Three of the main record types available at the Public Record Office which contain pension information are the Chelsea Regimental Registers (War Office file 120), the records of Soldiers Discharged Through Chelsea Hospital (W.O. 97), and the Applications for Pensions for Widows and Children [of officers], 1755-1908 (W.O. 42) Like many of their records concerning British Army personnel in the early part of the nineteenth century, the pension records discussed in this article are organized along regimental lines. So, to use them efficiently, you must know which regiment

your ancestor served in before you can begin.

**Chelsea Regimental Registers.** The Chelsea Regimental Registers are available both at the Public Record Office and the Family History Library (and associated Family History Centers). The first fifty volumes of these registers cover the period of about 1715-1843, and are arranged chronologically by the date of admission (to the hospital) within each army regiment. The last twenty volumes include the years 1845-1857, noting the actual pensions being paid. In this second series, the admissions occurring prior to 1845 have been arranged by the rate of the pension, while those after 1845 are recorded chronologically. Here again, we find an excellent picture of the soldier, in this case, at the time of his admission to the Royal Hospital in Chelsea. The register book includes his full name, date of admission to the hospital, his age, rank(s), time of service and the rate of pay. The column noting his "complaint" (reason for hospitalization) often includes mention of where the illness was contracted, or the wound was suffered. Finally, the registers give the town and country of birth, civilian occupation, and miscellaneous remarks. The Regimental Registers can also be found at the Public Record Office in W.O. 23, with extensions to 1876.

**Soldiers Discharged Through Chelsea Hospital.** These documents, filed as W.O. 97, were compiled at the same time as the Regimental Registers and thus contain much the same information. Here, the data is recorded on separate sheets for each man, rather than in a register format as the records in W.O. 120. The 1,279 volumes in the series are arranged alphabetically within each regiment, covering a period approximately from 1760 through 1872. The form itself is used to chronicle the sol-

dier's service and to provide proof of his discharge from the military.

Among the information included is his full name, town and county of birth, date, place and term of enlistment, and the period of his service (in years and days) from the time of his 18th birthday. This allows for an easy calculation of the exact date of his birth. His service record notes all of the regiments in which he served, with both beginning and ending dates, ranks attained and the total service rendered, again in years and days, in each rank and regiment. Service in either the East or West Indies is noted separately. The reason for his discharge (illness or wounds) is given, as are remarks on his general conduct while in the service, and notations on his height, complexion, eye and hair colour, and civilian occupation. The form is dated and signed by both the discharged soldier and his commanding officer. As with the Regimental Registers, these Soldier's Documents can be obtained on microfilm through the Family History Library and its Family History Centers, with the originals being on deposit at the Public Record Office.

**Pension Applications.** To make a proper application for pension benefits, the widow or her children had to include a variety of documents proving both military service by the officer to the Crown and their legitimate relationship to the deceased officer. Thus, the Applications for Pensions for Widows and Children (W.O. 42) are organized into numerical bundles, each including the application for the pension along with the supporting documents. These bundles have been filed alphabetically by the surname of the officer, with bundle numbers beginning anew at one for each letter of the alphabet (e.g., bundles 1-203 for the letter A, 1-739 for B, etc.) The time period covered by these docu-

ments is 1755-1908. Although the exact contents of each bundle varies somewhat, it is possible to find statements of service and commission for the deceased officer, as well as certificates of birth, marriage or death. In the absence of civil certificates (which began in 1837), there are usually signed statements certifying legitimate marriages and births. Of course, these certificates and statements include the names of the persons involved, with the date and location of the birth (or baptism), marriage, or death (or burial) indicated. As is the case with the Regimental Registers and the Soldiers' Discharge papers, these Pension Applications can be consulted at the Public Record Office, the Family History Library in Salt Lake City or at a Family History Center.

In this article on British military records, I've been able to cover several collections and their contents, but by no means have I exhausted the list of such records available for research by genealogists and historians. Of special interest are Hamilton-Edwards' "In Search of Army Ancestry", and "Records of Officers and Soldiers Who Served in the British Army", an excellent booklet published by the Public Record Office. Certainly seeking information on military ancestors is not always a bed of roses, but the records available can make the study fascinating, while providing a variety of unexpected rewards for the diligent researcher.

*Based on text posted on the Internet March 1997 and reprinted with permission from Lark Szick, free-lance writer and moderator on Compuserve of a history chat group.*

# Twentieth century research: Effective search strategies for the advanced genealogist

by Brian W. Hutchison, C.G., F.S.A.(Scot)

1. This material is extracted by permission from a lecture given to the Alberta Family Histories Society on 8 March 1997 titled "Twentieth Century Research - Effective Search Strategies for the Advanced Genealogist: The Forensic Case Study on the Estate of Cyril 'Frank' Keel".

## 2. Introduction

Genealogy is an interesting subject that some of us tend to view as almost a template of activities which if we follow will provide us with a set of results, hopefully positive ones. The fact of the matter is, however, that genealogy like any research is a thought provoking variable. Your future actions are dependent upon the research results already obtained. They vary from search to search and from problem to problem.

One must always be vigilant of the outcomes of searches, what they say (and imply), what they don't say, what was found and what wasn't found, who provided the information and when it was provided, etc. All of these speak volumes on what your next set of actions should be.

All of this may sound a bit difficult to the uninitiated but it becomes sound practice with a bit of searching under your belt.

One of the most important points to remember, however, is that there is a great difference to genealogical search conducted prior to the 20th century and those conducted on problems and resources placed in the 20th century (and for that matter the upcoming millennium!). The resources, the strategies, the problems, are all different because of two basic

issues that we as genealogists face: government privacy regulations, and the difficult or impossible access to contemporary records because of distance, storage and simple restriction.

This paper discusses the basics in furnishing effective search strategies for the advanced genealogist and the implications this has on forensic and 20th century research. I will provide you with a basis on which to:

- i. define your subject, location and time period;
- ii. define the objective of your genealogical search;
- iii. provide you with a discussion on the general and advanced search strategies one might employ on a problem;
- iv. present an analysis of the various resources available; and
- v. discuss the importance of the "preponderance of the evidence" principle.

## 3. Defining the objective of a genealogical search.

### 3.1 What is the overall scope of the search?

Now, one of the first things you must decide is determining what your overall scope for the project will be and for the specific searches in mind. Will you do a full extended familial trace or just one of the direct blood-line? Will you undertake a search of the paternal line, maternal line or both? How contemporary do you want or need to conduct your search? In other words, are you looking to find all descendants, all heirs to an estate, or simply to prove

the ancestral/descendancy lineages for a given period?

You must know before you begin your project what you want to accomplish with your searches. It is not enough to make it up as you go along. You must have some idea as to where you will begin with your search along with where and when the project will cease, or at least a point that some further extended action will be taken, such as writing a book on your findings. If you know from the beginning what you want to accomplish and how you need to go about doing that will make your search an enjoyable and effective enterprise.

### 3.2 Prioritizing your objectives.

Once you have defined your overall scope of the project, whether it be as simple as finding the heirs to an estate or whether it is producing a fully extended genealogy including collateral lines, you need to further breakdown that project into manageable objectives or searches. Not only must you breakdown the project scope but you must begin to decide on the priority placed upon these objectives in the overall search strategy.

For example, if your project scope is to locate the heirs of an intestate, your objectives may detailed as follows:

- i. to determine some factual information on the intestate and other collateral relationships;
- ii. then to identify the places of last known residence of these subjects;
- iii. thirdly, to ascertain whether the subjects are still living and if not, the names of their contemporary living

descendants;

iv. to search for the whereabouts of these prospective heirs; and

v. lastly, to contact the prospective heirs for confirmation of familial relationships.

On the other hand, if your project scope is more involved and meant to produce a fully documented extended genealogy including collateral lines for a progenitor, over the past two hundred years say, then your objective will be different and may be partially itemized as:

i. to determine some factual information on the progenitor known and other collateral relationships;

ii. to extend the search to a marriage or marriages of the progenitor, including dates and places;

iii. thirdly, to ascertain the names of children, dates/places of birth and their marriages;

iv. then to extract and compile biographical information on these families and their times;

v. etc., etc.

Depending on the scope of your project will influence the number and size of your detail objectives throughout it. However, regardless of the size, detailing your scope and prioritizing the search objectives within that will flow the effective and efficient progression of the project.

### **3.3 Narrowing the immediate search goals**

Lastly, in regards to defining key elements of your project, one needs to concentrate on narrowing down your list of search objectives to more immediate search goals.

Take an objective and break it down further into manageable goals. For example, if I am attempting to ascertain whether a set of subjects

are still living I might want to define my goal list for this objective as follows:

1. identify names of subjects, dates/places of major life events;

ii. search for the last known place of residence of subject;

iii. search and extract death records if subject is suspected to be deceased;

iv. extrapolate that information in search of descendants; and

v. extract contemporary documents in search of new addresses for living descendants.

Here you will have defined a manageable set of activities by which to meet your objective.

Now I will discuss some of the available strategies for investigating your defined goals. Resources and techniques that will make your search an effective and efficient undertaking.

## **4. Defining the subject(s), location(s) and time period(s).**

### **4.1 What defines the subject(s) and narrowing the search?**

Defining the subject, or individual, is often thought as the most obvious part of the entire search process. If you have a family of three where the name of subject X is known and the names of his father and mother are provided independently, and the objective of the existing search is to retrocede along paternal lines, then most of us would agree that the first search in our overall strategy would be to search for the marriage of the father and mother thereby obtaining the names of the paternal and maternal parents.

Actually, this is an incorrect commencement because you have overlooked one important item — an assumption that we have all made with this simple problem and with many in our own searches. That is

that the names of the father and mother as they were identified may not be the correct ones. We do not know who provided this information, we do not know where it came from or how it was arrived at.

We should have begun with a birth search of some sort on the subject himself to prove or disprove the premise of the parentage. Therefore, we need to carefully assess who our subject is for the basis of our immediate search and this can be accomplished by narrowing down what you know for certain (or at least based upon some documented proof!) and what you are not sure of. Based upon this analysis, and in conjunction with what your overall search objective is, will sift the “chaff from the wheat” when it comes to defining the key subject for the search.

### **4.2 Prioritizing your locations search and knowing your search area.**

Again, a similar analogy can be made with defining search locations. Using the same example, if the place of marriage for the parents of subject X is factually known to be the parish of Cumnock in Ayrshire, Scotland and the place of birth for subject X is reported in the parish of Borgue in Kirkcudbrightshire, where would we initiate our birth search of the siblings of subject X. Well, it wouldn't be in Borgue parish. We should start with Cumnock parish and work our way out in concentric circles. In the absence of information on a birth for the sibling in Cumnock parish our next search should be conducted in Borgue parish. With results of this information in hand we can then extend our search to census returns for further siblings and familial relationships.

In addition, become familiar with the area in which you want to conduct your search. Review some detailed



maps of the area or areas, try and determine ancient or contemporary lines of population movement within them and why the movement existed, where along these byways are the parish churches in relationship to your subject's residence, etc.

Therefore, it is extremely important with this type of research to contemplate what you know, what you don't know, what you want to know, what resources will provide you with an answer to that question, how to obtain those documents and then develop a method of fusing the results of this into developing a renewed search strategy. Developing a consistent framework on this model will keep your strategies effective and efficient.

#### **4.3 Isolating a time period to best initiate the search.**

Not unlike the previous example the third part of the your problem definition is isolating a time period to best initiate the search.

Here the time period is a little easier defined as it is based upon the definitions concluded to with the chosen subject and location for the search. By now you know your objective and search problem, you have defined your intended subject of the search, the location in which to conduct the search and lastly the time period in which the search problem should be investigated.

If you don't yet have specific years to assess, extrapolate a period in which to search the records based upon what you already know. For example, if the only thing you know regarding dates is that subject X was born in 1903, one can assume as a guideline that the parents were born sometime 1850 and 1889 and thus a marriage probably occurred between 1864 and 1903. Therefore to search for siblings use this extrapolated time period in which to conduct a series of birth searches. Actually the

period could be narrowed even further if you want to assume that the parents ages upon marriage were more consistent with the norm of age 21 for females and 25 for males. In this case, the search period is narrowed considerably to between 1871 and 1882 for a marriage. The marriage may have actually occurred after subject X's birth, as may have other siblings, but this search strategy should be considered first unless you have very good evidence to suggest the latter.

### **5. General search strategies.**

#### **5.1 Basic review of the knowns and unknowns.**

The initial part of one's strategy should be to assess what information is known and that which is unknown. We need to disseminate the fact from the fiction, the supported from the unsupported, and the proven from the unproven.

It is pointless to attempt the massive nature of these type of projects without being able to distinguish what you are trying to accomplish and what tools and information you have to work with.

#### **5.2 Application of strategies involving pre-20th century research.**

##### **5.2.1 Vital statistical records.**

Next, we need to decide on whether we need to look at a strategy involving pre-20th century research or that for a later time period.

Five of the most useful records for a general search strategy would be by way of vital statistical records, church records, census records, land and property records, and will and administration records. Though these record types are in no way indicative of solely pre-20th century research they tend to be more available and more accessible for this period. You will see later, however,

the relevance in using vital statistical records and will and administration documents as an important tool with 20th century forensic research as well.

Vital records provide you with some primary and secondary information on events involving birth, marriage, and death. They will give you a solid basis of information to support further searches on the subject. Such important pointers as:

- i. Age of subject(s);
- ii. Birth dates / places;
- iii. Marriage dates / places;
- iv. Death dates / places;
- v. Divorce dates / places;
- vi. Maiden names;
- vii. Names of parents, children, and other family members; and
- viii. Places of residence.

##### **5.2.2 Church Records.**

Church records can provide you with additional primary and secondary information on events involving birth, marriage and death. These too will give you a solid basis of information to support further searches on the subject. Again, you will find such important pointers as:

- i. Birth dates / places;
- ii. City or parish of foreign birth;
- iii. Country of foreign birth;
- iv. Marriage dates / places;
- v. Death dates / places;
- vi. Maiden names;
- vii. Names of parents, children and other family members;
- viii. Places of residence; and
- ix. Religion.

##### **5.2.3 Census returns.**

Census returns also provide one with some further secondary information on events involving birth, marriage, and death, if only implied or imputed. These too will give you a solid basis of information to

support further searches on the subject. Here, such important information as the following will be found:

- i. Age of subject(s);
- ii. Birth places;
- iii. Country of foreign birth;
- iv. Marriage dates / places;
- v. Death dates / places;
- vi. Occupation;
- vii. Names of parents, children, and other family members;
- viii. Places of past residence;
- ix. Religion (sometimes); and
- x. Immigration dates

#### 5.2.4 Land and property records.

Land and property records can also provide you with some very important primary and further secondary information on life events. These records tend to be overlooked because of the complexity in locating them and in their indexing, however they too will give you a solid basis of information to support further searches on the subject. Such important information may be found as:

- i. Places of past residence;
- ii. Marriages and relationships;
- iii. Immigration period and from where (sometimes).

#### 5.2.5 Wills and administration records.

Will and administration records also provide some of the very best primary and secondary information on life events. These records also tend to be overlooked because of the complexity in locating them, in their indexing and in their written legalese, however they too will give you a solid basis of information to support further searches on the subject. Such relevant information may be found as:

- i. Death dates / places;
- ii. Burial places (sometimes);
- iii. Parents, children and other family

members;

- iv. Places of residence(s).
- v. Living relatives (and adoptions) and their places of residence;
- vi. Social standing of subject(s)

### 6. Advanced search strategies.

#### 6.1 Secondary review of the knowns and unknowns.

Once you have taken an inventory of the general search strategies and have obtained some results you should concentrate on the more advanced search strategies or resources. Before doing so however, take a further review of your knowns and unknowns again. This is in fact something you should always be doing and adjusting your search strategy as needed to accommodate these revised factors.

Now, the advanced search strategies as I refer to them are really just resources that are not normally accessed by genealogists on a regular basis. They are not specific to doing 20th century research, though many of them are only available dating back 40 years or less, however they tend to be documents that are more useful in uncovering contemporary living descendants of subjects than of the normal deceased ancestral search variety.

#### 6.2 Getting past those sensitive "government privacy regulations".

One of the most difficult barriers facing us as genealogists when we attempt to access 20th century records is the sensitive, and sometimes puzzling, "government privacy regulations" placed on certain documents. Documents that were normally available to you with your general search strategies on pre-20th century work are now shrouded in secrecy.

There are methods, however, of getting around the usage of these documents and still obtain the

results you desire and I will discuss the manner of those resources now.

### 6.3 Application of strategies involving 20th century research.

#### 6.3.1 Primary advanced search strategies (review of).

##### 6.3.1.1 Court and other government records.

Court and other government records can provide some great primary information on subjects. Again, these records tend to be overlooked because of the complexity in locating them, in their indexing, and in their written legalese, however they, too, will give you a solid basis of information to support further searches on the subject. You will find important information as:

- i. Divorce information;
- ii. Living relatives (and adoptions) and their places of residence;
- iii. Occupations;  
*something missing here?*
- iv. Social activities.

##### 6.3.1.2 Funeral home and cemetery burial records.

Funeral homes and cemetery burial records are second to none in providing one with great primary and secondary information on subjects by which to extend your search. These records can easily be accessed and such relevant information may be found as:

- i. Ages of subject(s);
- ii. Birth dates / places;
- iii. Death dates / places;
- iv. Burial dates / places;
- v. Living relatives / informants and their places of residence;
- vi. Occupations;
- vii. Social activities;
- viii. Names of undertakers;
- ix. Religion;
- x. Maiden Names; and
- xi. Copies of obituaries (sometimes).

##### 6.3.1.3 Immigration, settlement and naturalization records.

Immigration, Settlement and Naturalization records again are very useful in providing one with added primary information on subjects by which to extend your search. These records are not easily accessible however, but can provide information as:

- i. City or parish of foreign birth
- ii. Immigration dates/ places
- iii. Occupations
- iv. Ethnicity
- v. Marriage information
- vi. Parents, children and other family members
- vii. Physical descriptions

#### **6.3.1.4 Knowledge of others connected (or thought to be connected) to subject.**

An important resource that is very often overlooked by many genealogists undertaking contemporary 20th century research is the knowledge of others connected (or thought to be connected) to our subject.

Acquaintances, friends, relatives, employers, rental managers, etc. can all provide you with clues on which to search further for your subject and their relatives. Do not overlook the potential here. If you have someone you knew was living in the Seaside Estate Apartments, for example, and he or she has moved within the past several years, contact the new tenant or the landlord for possible added information on the new whereabouts of the subject. You will be amazed at what people know about others and how eager they can be to share it with someone!!

#### **6.3.1.5 Monumental Inscriptions.**

Monumental or tombstone inscriptions are another very significant source for tracing contemporary period subjects and can extend your search even further. These records are easily accessible and can provide information as:

- i. Ages of subject(s)
- ii. Birth dates/ places

- iii. Death dates/ places
- iv. Marriage information
- v. Names of parents, children and other relatives
- vi. Occupations
- vii. Social activities
- viii. Religions
- ix. Maiden names

#### **6.3.1.6 Motor vehicle, license registrations.**

A further search that is a bit more difficult to undertake except by authorized agents is a motor vehicle and license registration search.

Here, provided you know an old address (within about the past 15 years) and a birth date for the subject you are interested in tracing you can make great strides if you have no idea where he or she may be residing. These searches are province/ state specific and not all provinces/ states are accommodating for these type of searches.

#### **6.3.1.7 Municipal Records.**

An additional resource that you might consult for tracing subjects would be municipal records. Though many of these are restricted on documents under 20 years of age, there remain many older than this and those of a general biographical nature on the municipality can be very helpful even.

Examples of these are tax records, property records, police and fire records, records on elected government officials, etc. Any of these may become helpful in establishing if your subject was in the municipality for a time and if so when and what became of them.

#### **6.3.1.8 Newspaper obituary notices.**

Newspaper Obituary notices are an excellent source in providing one with great primary and secondary information on subjects by which to extend your search. These records for the most part are easily accessible and provide a host of important

information as:

- i. Ages of subject(s)
- ii. Birth dates/ places
- iii. Marriage dates/ places
- iv. Death dates/ places
- v. Burial dates/ places
- vi. Immigration dates/ places
- vii. City or parish of foreign birth
- viii. Country of foreign birth
- ix. Living relatives and their places of residence
- x. Occupations
- xi. Social activities
- xii. Names of undertakers
- xiii. Religions
- xiv. Maiden names
- xv. Places of past residence

#### **6.3.1.9 Personal credit checks.**

A further search that is a bit more difficult to undertake is a personal credit check search.

Here, provided you know an old address (within about the past 15 years) and a birth date for the subject you are interested in tracing you can make great strides if you have no idea where he or she may be residing. As with many searches, you will undoubtedly have a fee to pay to undertake this investigation, however.

#### **6.3.1.10 Professional directories and telephone lists.**

Finally, an additional primary resource that you could access are professional directories and telephone lists. Even though an ever-increasing number of households are opting for private numbers or unlisted numbers, telephone directories still provide you with a wonderful resource when it comes to locating your subjects or their living descendants.

Professional directories are no different and provided that you know that your subject was a professional and may well be listed in such a directory they can be a great resource by which to locate

subjects and extend your search further.

### 6.3.2 Secondary advanced search strategies.

#### 6.3.2.1 Directed select mass mailings.

In the absence of other resources by which to help provide you with information, one might also use direct (but selective) mass mailings on certain households to try and locate the subject you are searching for. This has been a very effective search strategy for me over the past.

However, before you do this it is very important that you have exhausted all possibilities in learning more about your subject and be able to provide the reader of your letter with specific details on the subject you are searching for. From my experience, most people just do not want to be bothered with this type of mailing unless they are sure that it is them that you are searching for or

know your subject well. Provide them with just as much known and important information as you can and as needed on the subject, and in order to do this you must have already done your homework.

#### 6.3.2.2 Professional, occupational and society records.

A further secondary search resource that may prove helpful to you are those records dealing with professional, occupational and social activity organizations...

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*Note from the editor: At this point in the story we ran out of space. The concluding pages will appear in the next issue of Chinook.*

*Be sure to renew your membership to find how it all came out in the end!*

### About the author.

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## A dilemma: Selecting a genealogy program

by Bill Mumford

In the summer 1994 issue of the Chinook, I made some suggestions as to how the novice computer user might choose a genealogy program. At that time Commsort had recently released Roots IV. This was the long awaited successor to their enormously popular Roots III, considered by many at that time to be the best genealogical program available. R4, as it is more popularly known, had minimum requirements of a 386 SX processor, 4 megs of RAM and 10 megs of hard drive space. At that time these were rather limiting requirements and for which few of our local users had the

required hardware. Now, less than three years later, these requirements seem modest and are inadequate for a large number of programs.

So what has occurred in this short period of time to cause this to happen? The simple answer is memory. Ever since the invention of the digital computer the biggest problem has been the cost of memory. With inadequate memory complex manipulations of large amounts of data were prohibitively slow. By the mid '90s advancements in integrated circuit manufacturing technology had resulted in chips with a higher transistor density

at a very low cost. Not only did this make larger memory chips available but it also made possible processor units with increased speed and complexity.

With more available memory programmers we're now able to increase the amount of code in their programs. This resulted many enhancements not only to the programs but the operating systems as well. The addition of this extra code however slowed the computers which then required faster processors. They were developed. The increased speed of these processors then allowed the programmers to add

more code which in turn required more memory, and so it goes today. Faster processors, more memory, larger programs, more features and the cycle repeats.

This software revolution has not missed the genealogy programs. In the past year new programs with features previously not possible have appeared and many old favourites have been updated. The genealogist who is now attempting to start using a computer for the first time faces a bewildering choice. It is now more important than ever that the prospective program purchasers be able to identify those features which are important to them. Failure to do so could result in purchasing a program totally unsuited to their purpose. In the past this posed very little difficulty. If the program you chose had GEDCOM you could simply transfer the data to your new program. The old maxim, do not buy a program without GEDCOM no longer has the validity it once had. While basic birth, marriage, death, notes, and with the introduction of GEDCOM 5.5, sources may be transferred, a great deal of other information could be lost in the attempt. Even with GEDCOM 5.5 it is not unusual for the user to have to do a major editing job after a transfer just to get things in order.

In my earlier article I had described in some detail the various components one might look for in a program to determine its suitability. Such an approach is no longer possible. Programs are now being developed to serve specific market niches. Large software companies have targeted those areas in which they perceive the largest market and are designing their product to meet those specific requirements. Some smaller firms have identified those areas that the major companies have neglected and tailored their prod-

uct to them. Then there are a few who try to cover all the bases as best they can.

To aid the prospective genealogy software purchaser the following analogy might be of some help. Some programs are like a horse and carriage — look great and move along smartly but really can't do any serious work. They're perfect for taking Miss Laurie to the dance along with her box lunch but don't expect to use it for anything else. Then there are the buckboard type programs. They'll still get you to the dance but with a little less flash. The plus is that they can do a little work if it comes down to it. Just a little light hauling

**They check out the software at the local drug store and there they find, prominently displayed, a carriage type program whose advertising promises to deliver everything they want and more.**

but considerably more than the carriage. Then there's the dray. A solid sturdy vehicle that will haul anything you can load into it. Uses a team. Lots of horsepower. Probably won't impress anyone if you use it to get to the dance but you can haul the musicians, all the food and decorations, plus the whole family.

Many novice genealogists primary interest is to print a nice fancy chart for the family to marvel at as soon as possible. They check out the software at the local drug store and there they find, prominently displayed, a carriage type program whose advertising promises to deliver everything they want and more. Maybe even the family coat of arms and other such wonders. Since the novice genealogist represents the largest potential market these carriage type programs are often the only software kept in stock. Thus it becomes the responsibility of

the local genealogical groups to advise the novice of the availability of the multitude of other programs which may prove more suitable for their purpose.

To evaluate a program today I find it useful to divide its functions into three groups. I refer to them as documentation, reports, and convenience. The researcher whose aim is the recording of all family data and creating a family history will require a program with excellent documentation facilities. In other words, a dray. The person who merely wishes to record a few generations to create a fancy chart for the family reunion, will want a program that features those specific reporting capabilities. A carriage. The convenience segment contains all those little extras that, while not essential, determine the suitability of the program to the users needs and its ease of use. Let's examine the three areas.

#### **Documentation:**

For the family historian this aspect of any program is of prime importance. It concerns the recording of all the events in the life of an individual. As little as four years ago, with a few exceptions, the events most programs recorded were birth, baptism, marriage and death. Any other events were recorded in the notes field along with whatever source information was available. These four events hardly describe a person's life. As a result the definitive events were buried in the notes field. Anyone attempting to write a family history could expect to spend considerable time digging this information out.

Today the more powerful programs have the ability to store every event or fact, real or imagined, that has been documented in a person's life. Contradictory evidence may be recorded and assigned a subjective value representing the strength of its validity. By be-



ing able to record conflicting evidence from contradictory sources later supporting evidence may lead to some surprising conclusions. They can also link any witnesses to the events. All name variations or aliases may be noted. Data entry fields are long enough to avoid the use of abbreviations. There are note fields of unlimited length for every entry, regardless of whether it is a name, event, or source. All diacritics are supported. Current addresses may be stored. All exhibit items, be they scanned images, video or audio clips can be linked to the individual concerned.

For the researcher working in those time periods or countries where the usual birth, marriage and death records are non-existent this ability to store and document other records of varying types greatly aids the progress of the search. Estimated dates for the missing events may be recorded for sorting purposes but like all other entries may be assigned a surety level indicating their reliability. These programs will also not require the researcher to make assumptions, e.g., children may be recorded without a marriage being defined for the parents and birth order may be recorded when discovered. Children's relationship to the parents may be defined and both adoptive and natural family links recorded.

Of equal importance to the ability to store all types of data is the ability to record the source of that data. I have often heard the comment, "But I'm not a professional. I don't intend to publish this as an academically correct historical document". I don't either. But I do want to know where I found my data so that I can carry on my research in an organized manner. Like many who started their research years ago I have a database littered with linkages I can't prove and for which I

have no sources.

In some programs the researcher simply records the source as a free form note along with any gossip in the general notes. The better programs will provide individual source note fields for each event but the best programs will offer a structured source facility that ensures the researcher will record all sources for the various bits of data in precise detail complete with citations and repositories.

### Reporting

From the foregoing it is obvious that reporting requirements will vary greatly depending on the amount and type of data being recorded. The com-

**For the researcher working in those time periods or countries where the usual birth, marriage and death records are non-existent this ability to store and document other records of varying types greatly aids the progress of the search.**

prehensive program will require reporting facilities that can make full use of the data that has been recorded. These specialized reports can be most useful in planning future research. A program with minimal documentation would have no need for such reports.

Most programs provide the basic lists we are familiar with as well as the basic charts. In many cases however the latest technology has allowed programmers to create some rather fancy versions of the old favourites. Ancestral and descendant charts not only may contain more data but individuals might be in a decorative box and accompanied by photos. Group sheets come in a wide variety of forms with many options including photos. Several programs feature family albums and scrapbooks. Register reports are now available in several varieties including reverse. They may even be re-

ferred to as "books" and have the option of adding a table of contents, index, end notes or footnotes and a bibliography. There are also statistical reports, calendars, and custom reports which allow the user to select the events and individuals to be included. In at least one case the custom reports are created with Boolean logic which allows the creation of some very specific and useful reports. GEDCOMs fall under the report category and while version 5.5 should be considered the minimal input requirement the ability to customize the report for exporting data could prove useful.

### Convenience

As with the reporting function the convenience features will also vary greatly with the type of documentation features a program supports. It will also play a very important part in the selection process. If, for any reason, you find a program difficult or awkward to use all the best documentation or reporting features will be of little value as you will

soon consign the maddening beast to the bit bucket.

The convenience group contains all those extra features that might be referred to as utilities but it also has those features that, while not essential, make the program easier to use and give it that quality I term "feel". Among the items you will find in this category are alphabetical search lists, master location lists, source lists, relationship calculators, regnal date converters, spell checkers, text editors, date calculators, address books, exhibit logs, research logs, scanner support, global editing features, and output conversions. It is often very useful to be able to export the reports to a word processor or even the database itself to an external database. Macro keys and duplication keys can speed up data entry. Optional timeline display on the individual data

entry screens can aid in focusing the researchers attention of that particular age and often suggest new lines of research. Having the option to change the colours used in the screen display and the font can help the "feel". Context sensitive help can be of great assistance to the new user. One feature now beginning to be included with many programs is the ability to create a Web page.

One other feature often overlooked by the software purchaser is user support. The best support is an experienced user with a patient disposition living next door. While this is highly unlikely to happen choosing a program that is popular with the members of your local computer group is the next best thing. Almost all the program developers now offer e-mail support through their home pages and many programs have their own mailing lists. A problem posted to one of these lists can bring a quick answer, usually from an experienced user but for a particularly rare or difficult one, from the

program's author. The user should bear in mind that while every author or company will promise excellent support this often is not the case. Again, check with other users for the real story.

With many programs now becoming available on CD the publishers are scrambling to find some items to fill up all that empty space that the program does not require. Most try to find some database in the public domain that might have some use in genealogical research. Others have created marginally useful databases from genealogical data submitted by the programs users. You may also find commercial databases that may be "unlocked" by purchasing a key from the publisher. Some other publishers simply toss in some of their other products to add perceived value to the

package. It is up to the purchaser to evaluate the usefulness of this additional material to their purposes. One of the problems the new user faces when looking for a new program are the claims of the various program developers. They all claim to be easy to use, do fabulous reports, and be able to store all your data. From their perspective that may well be true but from the users point of view it may be a little overstated.

From the foregoing it is obvious that a programs overall usefulness is dependent upon its documentation strengths. This does not necessarily infer that the program with minimal documentation capability is undesir-

**If your purpose is to simply make up a nice little chart for the family reunion that includes the entire family back to great grandma who will be celebrating her ninetieth birthday that day you will be most disappointed if you choose a program that offers the best in documentation facilities.**

able however. If your purpose is to simply make up a nice little chart for the family reunion that includes the entire family back to great grandma who will be celebrating her ninetieth birthday that day you will be most disappointed if you choose a program that offers the best in documentation facilities. By the same token, a researcher who intends to do a family history will be most unhappy should they find themselves using one of the programs designed for our previous user. To use my horse powered analogy, don't buy a carriage if you're planning on some heavy hauling. By the same token, if all you intend to do is impress Miss Laurie don't get a dray.

So how does a newcomer to this world of computerized genealogy choose a program? The first requirement is to determine the level of research you

intend to pursue. Then try to meet other genealogists using computers. This may be done by attending any genealogy society's meeting. Find out who is using which program and why. Watch for demos. While these are unlikely to point out any of the products shortcomings they can provide useful comparative information. Read reviews of the different programs. Most reviewers try to present a positive assessment of a piece of software but will, if warranted, point out deficiencies. Demo discs or slideshow presentations are available for a number of programs. Since these are sales tools they are biased but often may provide some very useful information especially concerning the "feel" of a program. Some developers offer money back guarantees on the purchase of their product. This offers a comfort level if the software is on the expensive side. There is also the Shareware alternative. The Shareware "try before buy" policy allows the user to pick up a copy of the program at

little or no cost, use it for a certain time period, and then either scrap it or purchase it. There are a number of excellent programs available which, if not satisfactory, may at least help the new user develop a basic understanding of genealogy software and assist them in determining what features to look for in another program.

One last word. Don't be disappointed if you fail to find a program with everything you want. You may need a dray for your day to day work but a carriage is nice to have on Sunday. Of course, if cost is a factor, the old buckboard might just meet your needs. And on the subject of cost bear in mind that the genuine leather dashboard and other frills can make the little surrey every bit as expensive as the solid old dray.

# Gensoft VII

by Bill Mumford, Gensoft VII coordinator

GENSOFT VII was held Saturday, March 22nd 1997, from 9:30 am to 3:00 pm at the McDougall United Church, 8516 Athabasca Street SE.

Many thanks are extended not only to those photographed in the GENSOFT centrefold on pages 114-115... but to everyone listed below who 'pitched in' and helped make GENSOFT VII a resounding success. Well done everyone!

Alan Peers, Alison Forte, Allan Cole, Ann Andersen, Ann Stewart, Barbara Lafrentz, Bernice Warden, Bev Rayburn, Bill Mumford, Blair Barr, Bruce McKenzie, Dolores Williams, Doug Stobbs, Elaine Butler, Elizabeth Rodier, Eva Kinnear, Frank Morrow, Frank Reaume, George Lake, Gordon Hodgson, Gordon Hulbert, Irene Oikle, Jan Beecher, Janet Morgan, Joan Armstrong, Joan Gauld, John Moore, Judii Rempel, Julia Revak, Laurie Mathews, Lois Nicholson, Margaret Main, Marguerite Boisjolie, Norma Lendrum, Pat Yates, Paul McGinn, Phil Thorpe, Rosemary Lyons, Ross Haslam, Ruth Duncan, Sandy Irvine, Ulrich Haasdyk, Wayne Pickering, Wes Johnston and Xenia Stanford.

In order to better accommodate the Internet demonstration the church sanctuary was rented this year in addition to the basement facilities. This permitted us to seat all interested parties. We also contracted help to reset the basement for Sunday School, a task we did ourselves in the past. Rental costs this year were \$170 which covered the use of the sanctuary and over 7000 square feet of the basement plus the Sunday School setup contract.

Refreshments were provided by the Stevenson family at nominal cost. Any profits that might have accrued were to their account. No charge was made for use of the space.

All charges have not yet been submitted but the gross revenues of \$671 will be offset by expenses of at least \$290. Net proceeds should be approximately \$370.

Admissions this year were down dramatically from 1996 but showed an increase of about 25% from 1995. The drop in attendance might be attributed to two things. First, we were cursed with good weather this year. Previous experience has shown that if the weather is warm our attendance falls off as people tend to take advantage of the pleasant day after a long winter. The other factor was the lack of a primary focus for our

advertising. In 1996 we were fortunate enough to have two major articles in the Calgary Herald within three weeks of the show. We were also able to emphasize the use of the Internet as a genealogical research tool. This year the Internet has lost its lustre as a drawing card and the addition of new programs to our demo list could not create the same interest.

Our advertising was aimed specifically at those media which would be of interest to the type of individual doing genealogical research. In addition to the major newspapers contact was made with the Mirror and the Kerby News. Both ran notices of the event. In the electronic media we contacted CBC (both tv and radio), CFRN, CKNX, CHQR, and Cable 10. The latter featured us on "Plugged In" which ran four times and the event was announced some 22 times in the two weeks preceding the show. Posters and handouts were placed at the Public Library (Castell branch), the Glenbow, Kerby Centre, the Family History Center and McGinnovations. In addition notices were placed on the Internet sites of the AGS where available. Whereas last year Larry McCool and I fielded some 200 inquiries this year Frank Morrow and I received less than 50. As a point of interest however McDougall Church received about a dozen calls asking for their location.

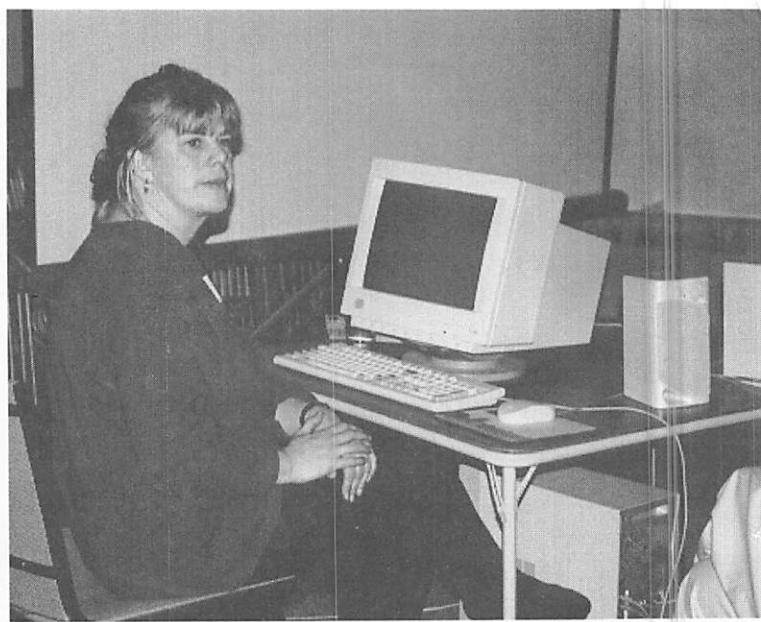
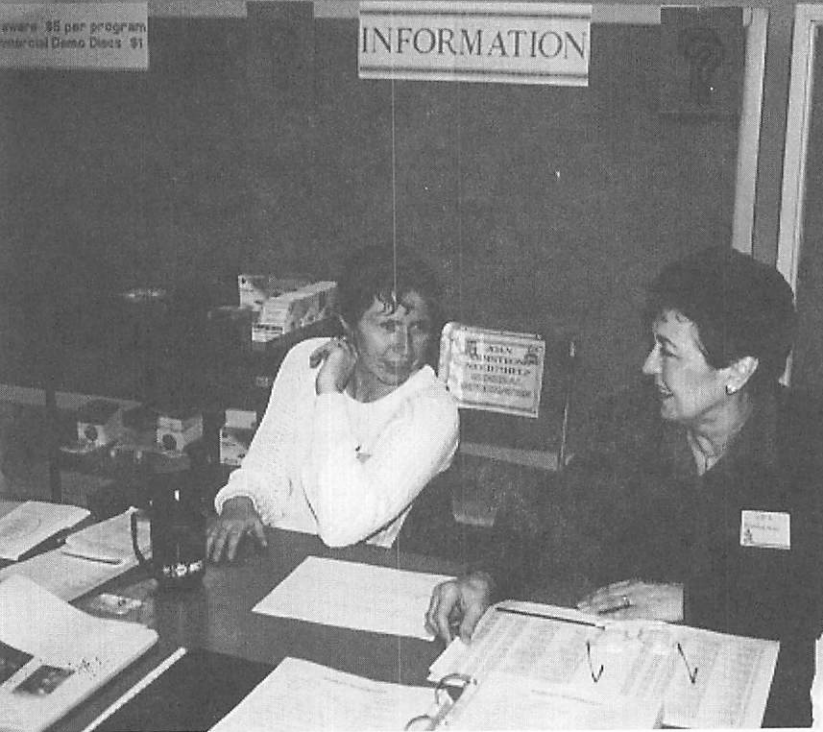
The setup of GENSOFT this year, in addition to the new Internet location, featured a computer help desk which proved very popular with the attendees. We also showed Family Origins for the first time and a beta version of a new program, "Legacy". Comments from the evaluation sheets each visitor was requested to complete were almost exclusively positive. There are several areas where changes might be contemplated but these are such that they will have to be considered carefully by next year's organizing committee. The free admission to the Wild Rose seminar was won by AFHS member, Pat Tillotson. Judii Rempel has completed an in depth study of the evaluation sheets and has requested similar input from the demonstrators. When finalized this information will be made available to the organizing committee.

GENSOFT VII required the efforts of 43 volunteers, four commercial demonstrators and four kitchen staff. While an exact accounting of volunteer hours required to plan and present GENSOFT VII is impossible an estimate may be made by allotting an average amount of time for

*continued on page 113*

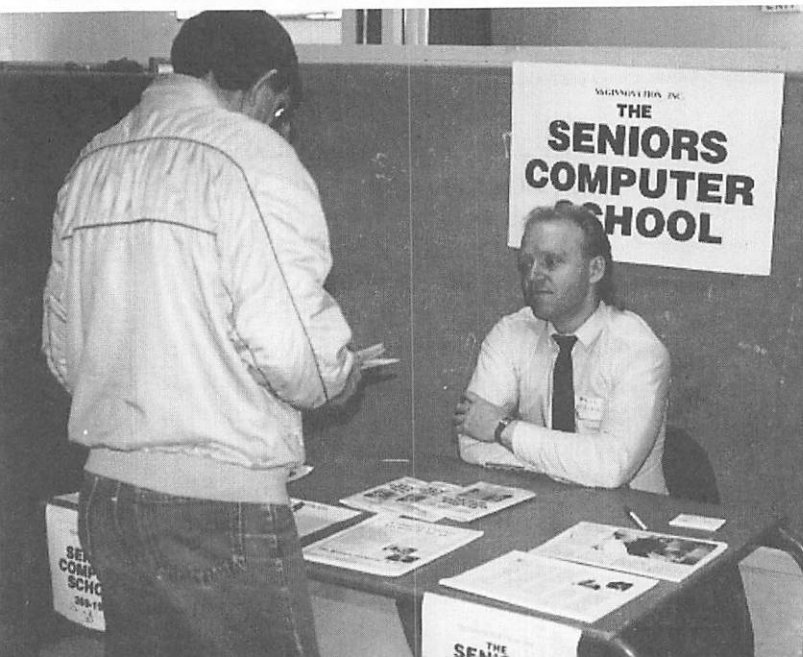
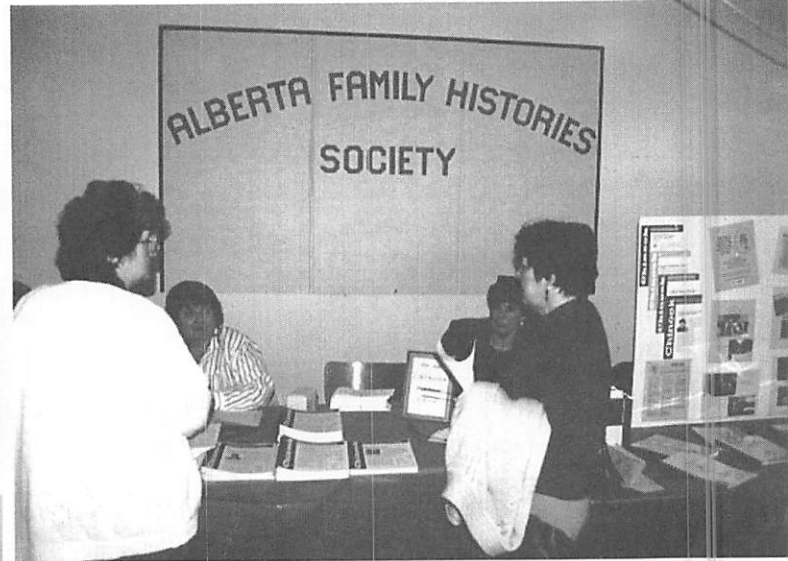
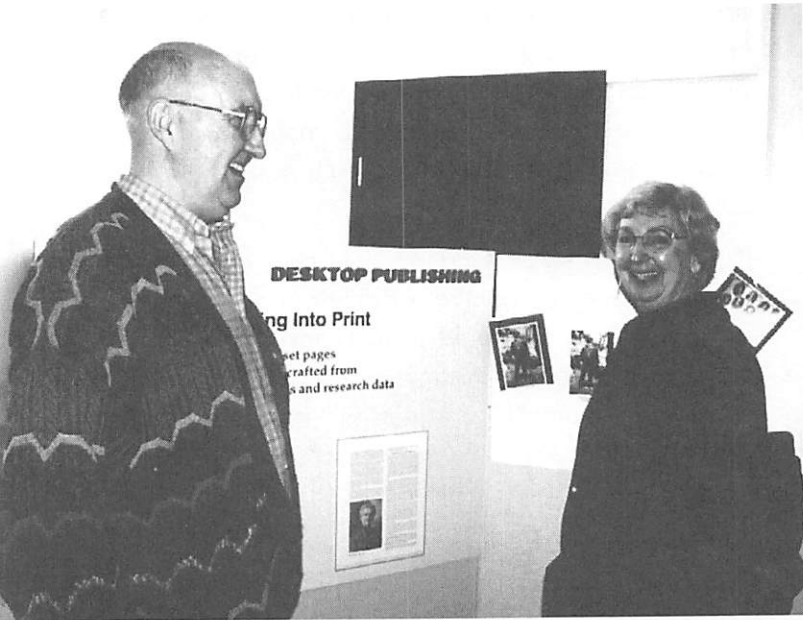




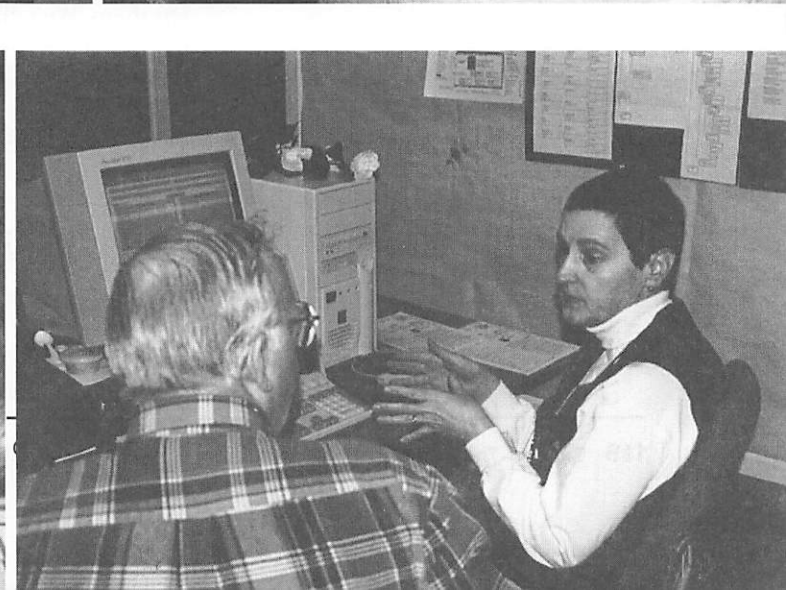
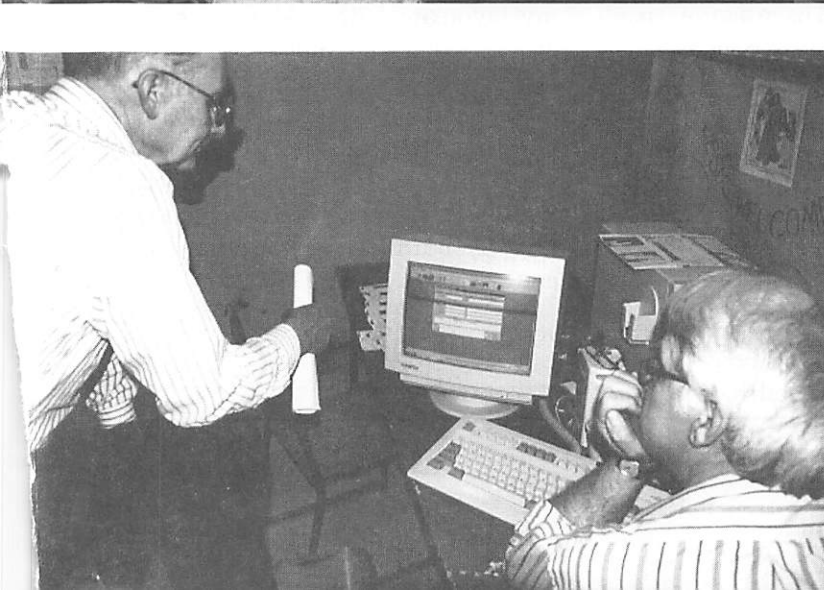
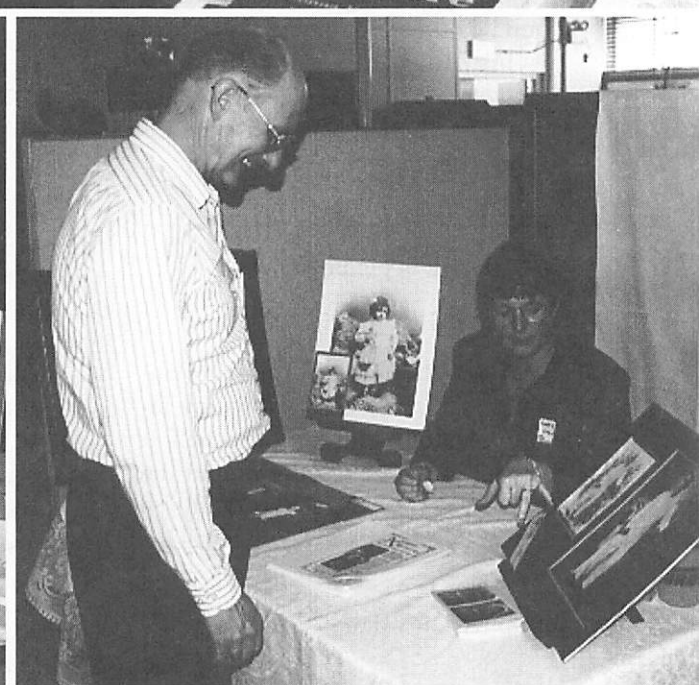
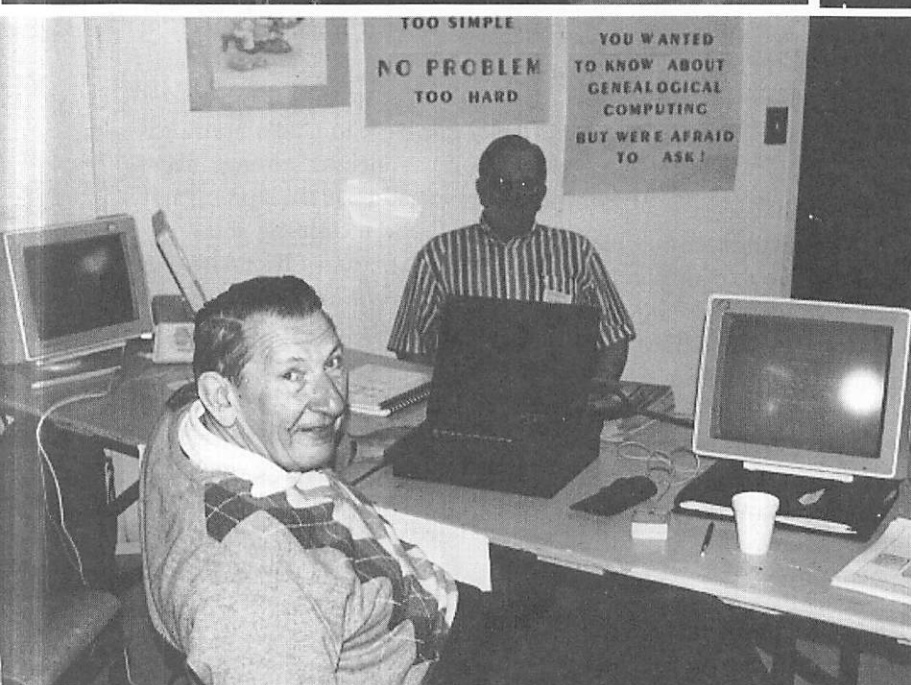
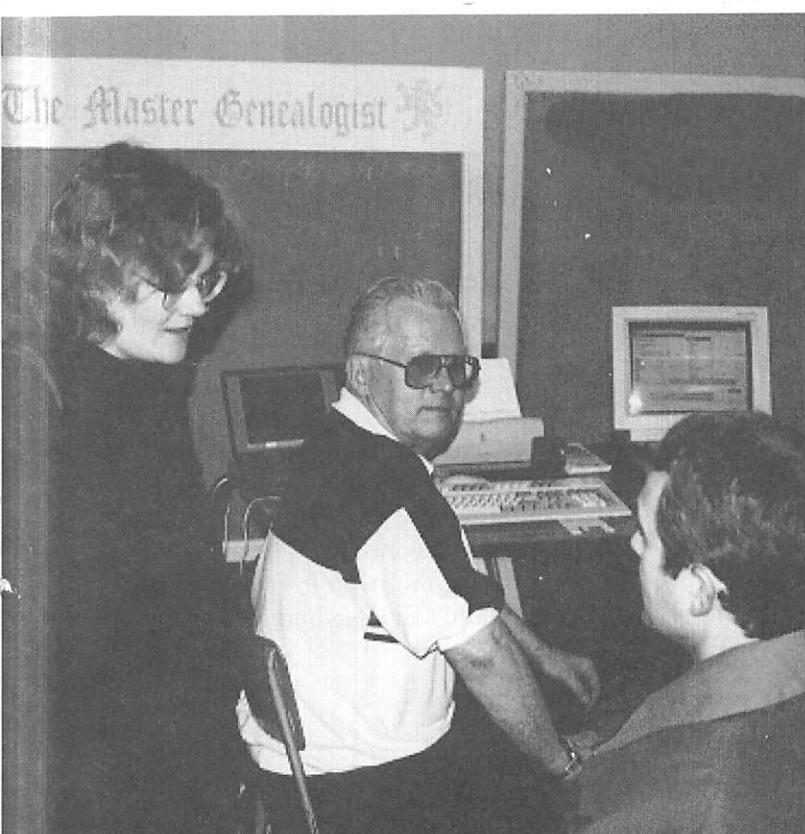


# Gensoft VII

by Gordon Hodgson

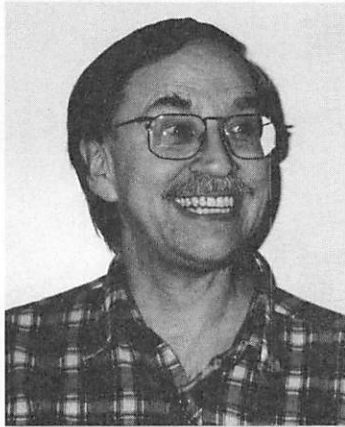






# Pages from beginning genealogists' diaries. 3

© 1997 Ron Stefan



While rummaging through the imaginary local bookworm sale last week, I found a number of diaries. I just love prying into other's innermost thoughts and secrets. So I bought those imaginary diaries. Here are a few excerpts from those:

---

Wednesday, September 27th

Dear Diary,

Well, tonight I finished reading another great mystery novel by my favourite author, Moses H. Krochell. It was set in the wild west around the time of the American Civil War. It's very late so I think this will be all for now.

Sleep well, my diary,

Terry.

---

Thursday, September 28th

Dear Diary,

My father died last night in his sleep. He was 83. He seemed to be in great health for his age. The doctor says it seems like a heart attack. I'm numb. This is just a little over three years since

Mom died. I don't think I'll sleep well tonight.

Good night, diary,

T.

---

Monday, October 2

Dear Diary,

Dad's lawyer contacted me. He has the key to the safety deposit box and a court order allowing us access to get Dad's will from it. We will meet at the bank at lunch and get it.

Good night, diary,

Terry

---

Tuesday, October 3

Dear Diary,

The lawyer and I went through the will today. Dad named me as executor. In addition to the house, furnishings, bank accounts and savings plans, it seems Dad had some shares in some companies I never heard of and some land, and some mineral rights to land. I never knew he had that stuff. There were other papers too in the box. The lawyer said we have to deal with all of it.

I contacted those people mentioned in the will and told them what Dad had left them. We will have a formal reading in the lawyer's office on Friday.

Good night.

T.

---

Saturday, October 7

Dear Diary,

I went through Dad's house today. I never realized how much stuff he had

stored away in that house. It certainly seemed neat to outside appearances. But there are some old letters, clippings from newspapers, photographs, old clothes, postcards, a variety of souvenirs, things I don't recall seeing before. I have moved most of the stuff out of the closets and into the main part of the rooms. It will take quite a while to go through it. Maybe I will just throw it out. Nothing looks valuable.

Toodles,

T.

---

Saturday, October 14

Dear Diary,

I finally got back to Dad's house today. Took a bunch of garbage bags, prepared to gather all the stuff up and pitch it. I found a clipping about my Dad's father's obituary. It said he was survived by his wife and four sons and two daughters. It was kind of weird. So far as I knew I only had two uncles and one aunt. And all these years that's all Dad and Mom ever told me about. I wonder who those people were. The obituary didn't give the names of the sons and daughters, only the number of them. It has really tweaked my curiosity. These people were perhaps born just around the end of the US Civil War. Sort of like the times that my favourite author Moses wrote about. I wonder if I could be as good a detective as Moses and find out who those missing uncles and aunts were. I have decided to go through some of the stuff before throwing it out to see if I can put these pieces of the puzzle together. But I have to get rid of the junk. And so to bed...

Terry

---

Monday, October 16

Dear Diary,

I told Jack at work about the obituary I found. He said he knew someone who did family history research who might be able to help me. So I telephoned this Mary and she said she would be glad to help me get started. She said not to throw anything out yet. So I may have to wait awhile before selling the old home off. Saves me the cleanup effort for now. But the junk still has to go!

'Night, Diary,

T.

---

Friday, October 20

Dear Diary,

Mary met me at the library after work today. She showed me a few books on genealogy that I should borrow from the library. Genealogy is the study of family relationships, who our ancestors are, who are relatives are. It seems simple enough. Like she says, start with what you know and then work back. She also showed me that we can learn a lot about our "ancestors" from their belongings and not just from written or printed documents. The "junk" might provide valuable clues to my ancestors backgrounds, interests, and activities...

T.

---

Saturday, October 21

Dear Diary

Spent a good portion of the day reading those genealogy books. This is going to be just like working my way through a mystery, except in the best of modern day speaking this will be interactive and participative. Should be fun.

T.

Sunday, October 22

Dear Diary

Wow! The things Dad saved are kind of amazing. Wish he was here to explain some of it to me.

There's a copy of a will from my Dad's father. My Dad was the executor. It gives the names of my grandmother, and several aunts and uncles, but the numbers don't match the obituary I found earlier. It mentions some land titles.

And there's a letter from Aunt Josie. She has such beautiful handwriting.

And I found a Bible with some records of births, weddings, and deaths written on to some of the pages. All the handwriting seems to be Aunt Josie's. They cover a period from 1820 to 1920. It says Aunt Josie was born in 1873. This should be a great help.

Mysteriously yours, my diary,

Terry.

---

Tuesday, October 24

Dear Diary,

Mary called tonight to see how I was doing and to see if there was anything she could help with. I told her about the wonderful source the Bible seemed to be. She sure set me right. If the handwriting is all Aunt Josie's then she must have written it in much later than the actual events and may not be accurate. Hmmm. Have to sleep on that.

And so to bed,

Goodnight, diary.

T.

---

Thursday, October 26

Dear Diary,

At Mary's recommendation I contacted the probate office in the local

court and requested an official copy of grandpa's will. Seems after looking at the copy I have here that it was maybe written by Aunt Josie too! Been reading my way through the newspaper clippings. Some of them seem to be about relatives. Quite a few obituaries, marriage and birth notices. Most of them don't have dates, or even years on them. And I can't tell which newspaper they came from. Some of them just seem to be about random events. Someone could have saved me a lot of time and puzzlement if only they had saved the whole page or written at least the date in some of the blank spaces. These clippings do give me a bit of feel for what was going on in history when my ancestor/relatives were alive though. I never really thought about the fact that my ancestors all lived though "history." But for certain, some of my ancestors were living all throughout history. If they weren't directly involved in all those "important" events that I had to learn about in grade school, they nonetheless were somewhere on this planet while it was happening. They may have be directly or indirectly affected. Or it may not have affected them at all! More local events would have impacted on their daily lives. I never was really interested in history before. Other than the Moses novels that is.

This is kind of neat.

'Til tomorrow,

Terry

---

Wednesday, November 15

Dear Diary,

Got the official copy of grandpa's will today. It's a photocopy but it's reasonably legible. Not my Aunt Josie's handwriting this time. I compared the two. There were a couple of slight differences in names, Christine instead of Christine, Laurent instead of Lauretta, and Charles Edward instead of Uncle

Theo. And the legal description of the land had different numbers, a 12 instead of a 21, a 7 for a 1. Other than that my Aunt made a great copy. Reading her handwriting was much easier than my grandpa's lawyer's. Seems that grandpa had very little education. I realize now that trying to find out about my ancestors would have been a lot easier if I would have paid more attention to my parents and relatives when they were discussing other family members. I wish Mom and Dad were still alive so I could ask them all the questions that these bits and pieces of paper only hint at. I wonder if one of my living uncles or aunts or cousins could provide some answers?

T.

---

Friday, November 17

Dear Diary,

Uncle Jeremy called me today. He wants to buy the land that Dad left to me. He claims he would like to have it for sentimental reasons. He says it was the old family homestead when our family first came out west. I never knew that. I asked Mary about this. She says there is a lot of information that can be obtained or inferred from land titles records. She told me how to contact the land titles office and get a copy of the ownership records relating to that land. She also said I should try and see if the towns nearby published any sort of centennial history of the area that might have some paragraphs about my family. So now I have more to do on Saturday.

'Til then,

Terry

---

Saturday, November 18

Dear Diary,

I had a call from a realtor today. She thinks she may have a family that

would be interested in buying Dad's house! Gee, I didn't even offer it for sale. Now I have to decide whether to sell it or not. I haven't finished reading all the stuff in the house. There is lots I haven't even started on. Went to the library. The librarian showed me the local history section. There are all sorts of books on just about every village and hamlet in the area. I had no idea that these people in these small towns had any ability to create books. But there seems to be a lot of pride about what they do and what their ancestors did to create the basis of the environment that we enjoy today. There are so many stories about families written from a first-person perspective. It really is fascinating. There was mention of a family that might be related to mine, since they have the same last name. But none of the first names match anything I have found to date so they may not be related!

The book I really wanted seemed to be missing from the shelves!

Terry

---

Sunday, November 19

Dear Diary,

Talked with Mary today. She told me that I should have recorded the information about that family with the same last name. She said that I would be sorry later if I found out that they were related and I had to try to remember where I read about them. So the trick seems to be to not discount something without proof that it doesn't relate. Mary suggested that the missing book might only have been in use by some other patron of the library, or might have been mis-shelved...

Seems like a search in the library might require some detective skills too. Those genealogy books had some good suggestions, but help and suggestions from some one who is actively doing research on their own family

and using them as a sounding board to discuss problems is even more useful. Mary seems to have made a lot of mistakes, and run into a variety of problems not discussed in those books, and she is not afraid to share her research experiences. We'll have to talk more...

Good night, diary,

T.

---

Monday, November 20

Dear Diary,

The realtor called again. Her clients are now offering a lot more than previously for Dad's house. If I sell the house I could go on a great vacation. If I sell it I will have to do something with all of Dad's stuff. I could hold a garage sale. I sure don't have room for all of it in my house. I wonder if any of the local archives, museums, or libraries would be interested in owning or storing it. I wonder if there are others that would be interested in caring for it. I wonder who or how to contact them. I wonder if it can all be somehow condensed, microfilmed, videotaped, or recorded somehow for posterity. So many questions. Where do I start? My brain is starting to hurt. I will have to chase some of this down tomorrow for sure.

Well, diary, wonderingly yours,

Terry.

*(to be continued...)*

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# Highlights from exchange journals received in the AFHS library

by Helen Backhouse and Lorna Stewart

## CANADA

- Family Chronicle magazine, vol 1 no 4  
March/April 97
- Beyond the Genealogy section
  - The Battle of Agincourt Honor Roll

## Mennonites

- Mennonite Historian, vol XXIII no 1 March 97
- Allianz in Ukraine: more pieces of the Puzzle
  - Amish Mennonites: their origins and place in the Canadian Mennonite Mosaic

## Metis

- Neya Powagons, no 44 January 97
- Map - Indian Treaties of Canada
  - Surname interests
- no 45 March 97
- Examples of appointments and service from the Hudson's Bay Company Archives
  - Surname interests

## Alberta

- Alberta Genealogical Society, vol 25 no 1  
Feb 97
- Are you a Polish Scot or a Scottish Pole?
  - Cemeteries then and now
  - Peace Country Veterans
- Ft. McMurray AGS, vol 18 no 1 March 97
- Reforming the English language - smile
- Grande Prairie and District AGS, vol 20 no 1  
March 97
- Michael Schmaus (1851-1915)
  - Obituaries "The Daily Herald-Tribune" Jan-Dec 1996

## British Columbia

- Kelowna and District Genealogical Society,  
vol 13 no 3 March 97
- Index of names listed in Kelowna Supreme Court Probate/Estate Files
  - New Adoption Act — British Columbia
- South Okanagan Genealogical Society,  
vol 4 no 6 March 97
- Irish names
  - Parish Registers of Dunfermline,

## Scotland

### Manitoba

- Manitoba Genealogical Society, vol 22 no 1  
March 97
- Letter from Red River 1858
  - Nind Inawendimin - Our relations

### New Brunswick

- New Brunswick Genealogical Society  
vol 19 no 1 spring 97
- Passenger list for the Brig Ambassador, Londonderry to St. John N.B. 1834
  - A genealogist's view of deaths in St. John during the Cholera Epidemic, mid-June to mid-Sept. 1854

### Nova Scotia

- Nova Scotia Genealogical Association  
vol XV no 1 spring 79
- Opportunity and Migration: Ancestors on the Occupational Trail
  - Compiling and Publishing Your Family History, part III

### Ontario

- Elgin County Branch OGS  
vol XVI no 1 March 97
- Southwold Township
  - Southwold names 1811-1817
- Haldimand County Branch OGS  
vol 8 no 1 March 97
- Epitaphs
  - Gleanings from the Dunnville Gazette - Marriages 1884 and 1892
- Leeds and Grenville Branch OGS  
vol 23 no 1 Feb/March 97
- Flint family Bible 1852
  - Emsley, 1851 Agricultural Census
- Ontario Genealogical Society  
vol 36 no 1 Feb 97
- Fur Trade families then and now: the North West Company connection
  - Genealogy: the somewhat unappreciated study
- Sault St. Marie and District Branch OGS  
vol 15 no 1 spring 97
- Canada's first Census
  - Stickney Cemetery, Tarbut Additional

## Twp.

- Toronto Branch OGS  
vol 28 no 2 March/April 97
- The story of Emily Elizabeth Boggis Anderson
  - Henry Scadding

## Quebec

- Quebec Family History Society  
vol 19 no 3 March 97
- Military Service and Family Members, researching WW1 (1914-18) Canada
  - Quebec City Gazette 1846-1855 Marriage Notices (H)
- Société de Généalogie de Québec  
vol 23 no 7 Mars 97
- Jean-Baptiste Hébert et l'église de Saint-Roch-des-Aulnaies
  - Réalités genealogiques d'aujourd'hui
- Société Généalogique de l'est du Québec,  
• Charles Pearson
- Notes sur des unions entre indiens et français région de Ristigouche

## ENGLAND

- Bedfordshire Family History Society  
vol 11 no 1 March 97
- The inhabitants of Southill 16 Dec 1833
  - Temples and Tabernacles: the origins of the English Parish Church
- Berkshire Family History Society  
vol 20 no 3 March 97
- Memories of Slough
  - Frederick Fisher - Fulsome Philanderer?
- Birmingham and Midland Society For  
Genealogy and Heraldry  
vol 11 no 7 March 97
- Genealogy and Jewish History
  - Beware the I.G.I.
- Bristol and Avon Family History Society  
no 87 March 97
- Information on the Tithe System
  - Where do I go from here
- Buckinghamshire Family History Society, vol  
21 no 1 March 97
- Catholic and Quaker ancestors
  - Where are you from? A question of Settlement
- Calderdale Family History Society  
no 77 Dec 97
- Burials St. Andrew's Church - Stainland



Cleveland (South Durham and North Yorkshire)  
Family History Society  
vol 6 no 9 Jan 97

- County boundary changes - as of now
- How's your Latin? - Glossary of Occupations

Cumbria Family History Society  
no 82 Feb 97

- The Whitehaven volunteers of 1859
- "Stray" weddings from the Orton (Westmorland) Parish Registers

Derbyshire Family History Society  
no 80 March 97

- Village of Riddings
- Post haste through Chesterfield

Devon Family History Society  
no 81 Feb 97

- Roger Luxton (1813-92) the "Song-Man"
- A mild deception

Dorset Family History Society  
vol 10 no 1 Dec 96

- Election riot at Shraftesbury 1830
- County Strays

vol 10 no 2 March 97

- Newfoundland Fiching Expedition
- Letters from Australia

East Surrey Family History Society  
vol 20 no 1 March 97

- Look at Surnames
- The Browns of Reigate

Family Tree Magazine  
vol 13 no 3 Jan 97

- The Norfolk heretics
- Emigration from Britain: a selected list of printed, microform and CD-ROM sources (cont)

vol 13 no 4 Feb 97

- School Records part II
- Surname History: a new technique, e.g. Hodgson

vol 13 no 5 March 97

- The Black Death
- Emigration from Britain: a selected list of printed, microform and CD-ROM sources (cont)

Felixstowe Family History Society  
vol 11 no 4 Dec 96

- Searching for a Certificate before St. Catherine's!
- A Stud

vol 12 no 1 March 96

- Obituaries and local newspapers
- Vaccination Records for Walton 1884-1898

Herefordshire Family History Society  
vol VI no 7 Oct 97

- Lucton School founded c1700
- Morgan Aubrey's Legacy: the Swan and Falcon, Hereford, 1662

vol VI no 8 Jan 97

- Don't forget the Newspapers
- Inquests 1825 and 1826 from Coroner's papers
- Return of Papists 1767

Huntingtonshire no 25 Nov 96

- The Justices and their Records

- The rise and fall of the Montagus of Kimbolton

International Society for British Genealogy and Family History  
vol 19 no 1 Jan-March 97

- Settlement and Vagrancy Laws
- Periodical Collection available

Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies  
vol 18 no 150 Jan 97

- Huntingdonshire Men at the Battle of the Dunes
- The Lion in the Low Countries - a survey

Kent Family History Society, vol 8 no 5 Dec 96

- People on the move
- The Jews of Dover and their records

Lancashire Family History Society  
vol 17 no 4 Nov 97

- Rev. William Watkiss 1829-1892
- A Manchester family of Penningtons

vol 18 no 1 Feb 97

- Robert Leroy Parker alias 'Butch Cassidy', \$4,000 Reward will be paid for the capture Dead or Alive
- Punctuated transcript of un-punctuated letter 1889

Leicestershire and Rutland Family History Society, no 87 March 97

- Looking for the origins of an ancestor who emigrated to Canada?
- Highways and byways of Leicestershire

Northamptonshire Family History Society  
vol 18 no 3 Feb 97

- Birch families in Northamptonshire
- Parish profile - Raunds

Nottinghamshire Family History Society  
vol 9 no 10 Jan 97

- Map of Nottinghamshire Parishes
- The Sixteenth Century Reformation in North Collingham

Ripon Family History Society  
vol 3 no 3 June 96

- four articles which all involve Court cases

vol 3 no 4 Oct 96

- Old people in the Workhouse
- The iron industry of Knaresborough Forest and the Nidderdale Valley

vol 3 no 5 Jan 96

- 11 and 12 Market Place, Ripon
- Sedbergh School Register 1546-1909

Shropshire Family History Society  
vol 17 no 4 Dec 96

- The origin of surnames
- Stokesay Connections - family links and a crime

Society of Genealogists, vol 25 no 9 March 97

- Huguenot descendants 19th century district - visiting in London's East End
- Coffins to Cornwall - a grizzly assignment

Somerset and Dorset Family History Society  
vol 22 no 1 Feb 97

- Researching the poor - several features

- Dorset family names

Suffolk Family History Society  
vol 22 no 4 Feb 97

- List of guarantors and subscribers for St. Peter's Church, Cockfield c1930
- Suffolk bankruptcies 1860-61

West Middlesex Family History Society  
vol 15 no 1 March 97

- Electoral Registers as a research resource
- The Census and Census Indexes

Wharfedale Family History Society  
no 22 Dec 96

- The Horsforth Boulder Stone - Honour Roll WW1

no 23 March 97

- The Horsforth Boulder Stone, cont.
- 1871 Census, Shipley, Yorkshire
- The Parish of Kettlewell

Woolich and District Family History Society  
no 64 winter 96

- Honour Roll South Metropolitan Gas Co. 1914-18
- The Hulks

Yorkshire Family History Society, vol 23 no 1 Feb 97

- Surfing the Internet part 3
- Leeds Moral and Industrial Training School

## IRELAND

Ulster Genealogical & Historical Guild  
no 12 1996

- Emigrants from Ulster in Prince Edward Island 1770-90
- Civil Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages in Ireland: a practical approach

Directory of Irish Family Research 1996

## SCOTLAND

Aberdeen and North East Scotland Family History Society, no 62 Feb 97

- James Elmslie, Quarrier in Loanhead, and James Elmslie in Culmellie were they the same man?
- Taking the Mick!
- Membership List February 1997

Dumfries and Galloway Family History Society  
no 28 March 97

- Who was Lewis MacMazon? (Mason)
- Lt. James Edward Tait, 78th Batt. C.E.F.

Glasgow and West of Scotland Family History Society, no 48 Spring 97

- The Dunlops of Garnkirk (cont)
- Glasgow City Archives

Scottish Genealogical Society  
vol XLIV no 1 March 97

- Mull people
- Scottish vessels in Durham Ports on

the night of 3rd April, 1881 (census)  
cont.

Tron and District Family History Society, no  
20 Feb 97

- Magic Moments (hospitals c1838)
- Could your ancestor be on a Voters Roll?

- ...by the company they keep, using land records to form associations of your ancestors
- Signposts and Surname patterns (U.K.)
- Cherokee Rolls and Western Cherokee Research

Gwent Family History Society  
no 45 March 97

- The Great Flood of 1607
- The Purnell and Isitt families of Newport, Mon.

Gwynedd Family History Society  
no 32 spring 97

- Tracing Mediaeval ancestors
- The Lloyds of Gwyddfrynau, Llanegryn, Meirionnydd in the 17th Century

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#### UNITED STATES

Utah Genealogical Association  
vol 25 no 1 1997

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#### WALES

Glamorgan Family History Society  
no 45 March 97

- Appalling boating fatality at Aberavon
- Another disaster at Aberavon

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# All because of a travel brochure

by Stanley H. Clute

Serendipity sometimes works in strange ways!

I shall preface this short article by stating that my maternal grandmother's maiden name was Minnie Breckles. She was born at Birmingham, England on 1 May, 1876. She married John William Butcher at Wednesbury, Staffordshire on 12 July, 1896, and she died at Toronto, Canada on 9 July, 1949 when I was eighteen months old. Minnie was the eldest daughter and second child of Anthony Breckles and Laura Breckles, née Lee; a granddaughter of Anthony Breckles and Elizabeth Breckles, née Sainty, of Ipswich, Suffolk; and a great-granddaughter of Joseph Breckles and Mary, née Culf, who were wed at Ipswich in 1814. Although there are records of earlier Breckles individuals in the area as far back as the seventeenth century, I have not yet been able to connect them up with any certainty.

Breckles is an uncommon family name (some families spell it Breckels) and its origin was a puzzle. I had discussed the possible beginnings of the name with a cousin in Toronto. My cousin was convinced that the name had a German sound to it and that it had likely originated in that country.

Early in 1996, I had — via the Internet — gotten onto a mailing list for free travel brochures from East Anglia and they have arrived at intervals ever since. Late last spring, I was glancing through a brochure extolling the virtues of the county of Norfolk when my eye was suddenly riveted by a small advertisement for a bed-and-breakfast in the village of — you guessed it — Breckles. This was a village that I had never heard of in a part of Norfolk that I had never heard of... Breckland! The name of this village being identical with the family name had to be more than mere coincidence.

It was at this point that I enlisted the help of a family

friend who, it turned out, lives near the town of Thetford, not far from Breckles village. He drove to Breckles (sometimes spelled Breccles) and met the lady who runs the B & B, who is also the church secretary. He was able to look at the church visitors book, from which he was allowed to extract the names and addresses of three English Breckles families who had visited the place and signed the book. These he sent to me, along with a printed copy of a sketch of this architecturally interesting church. I very nearly missed receiving his letter with this information, for the postman misdelivered it, and it was only through the kindness of the neighbours to whom it was delivered that it finally found its way into my hands. Needless to say, I promptly wrote to all three of the addresses that he provided.

I received only two replies, for two of the three people I had written to were brothers. The first reply was from a hitherto unknown third cousin in Nottinghamshire who not only provided a tree of his own extended Breckles family, but also advised me of seven siblings of my great-grandfather Anthony Breckles (the younger) of whose existence I had been unaware. The second family (Breckels) was not able establish any definite connection with me but has given me St Catherines House index information on several marriages and deaths in my Breckles family. I shall be ordering the relevant certificates in the near future.

As I stated at the beginning of this short article, serendipity sometimes works in strange ways. Had it not been for that travel brochure and the ad it contained, I might never have known about, or made contact with, this new family of cousins. It's a far stranger world than many of us could ever have imagined.

# What's happening and where...

by Ruth Duncan



## The Irish Genealogical Project

The Irish Genealogical Project has been generating a lot of discussion and press. Some of the comments have been complimentary about particular centres. More often, it seems, researchers have been disappointed and sometimes rather angry with their experiences.

The information (below) about the Tipperary North Centre is an example of what the centres are trying to accomplish. This centre is one that I contacted for assistance. Although the centre was not able to supply me with any information about my ancestors, the staff sent me a letter providing a list of all resources they had checked and the cost was very reasonable. I was pleased with the attention to my request and the report.

Tipperary North Family History Foundation The Gatehouse, Kickham Street, Nenagh Tel 067 33850, Fax 067 33586.

Computerisation of Tipp North's records started in September 1991. The return for four years' work is a database of over half a million records, consisting of church and civil births,

deaths and marriages, land records, gravestone inscriptions and the 1901 census. Additional to this other sources have been indexed, like births, deaths and marriages in the Nenagh Guardian, postal directories, Landed Estate Court's sales and the current register of electors. Parish maps and profiles of parishes and surnames are well on the way to completion. While the civil records fill the gap 1864 onwards, access to the much older church records (most are pre-1820) is essential. Efforts to secure access continue. Alongside the computerisation of the records, there is a research service which dealt with over 500 enquiries in 1995. Research is located in the Gatehouse of the former Tipperary North Riding's County Gaol. The Centre is the designated research centre for the geographical area of Tipperary North under the countrywide Irish Genealogy Ltd. It does not provide do-it-yourself facilities.

Personal enquiries are welcomed and while instant service cannot be guaranteed, researchers can usually respond within a few hours. Postal enquiries are preferred. Replies are given within a month.

A good range of books about County Tipperary is available for purchase.

*(From The Irish Link, June 1996).*

### Comments:

Stories, complaints, suggestions, and sometimes bouquets that I have heard or read would fill many pages but, briefly, they were similar to the following:

1. I'm sure my letter wasn't read. I had listed the record groups that I had already checked. The Centre, in a form letter, listed six record groups they

had, but they wanted me to fill in the form and send the standard fee for searching all six records, even though in my letter I had stated that I had already checked five of the six. I would like to pay for only what I need...

2. The cost of a preliminary search seems very high. Why is it so costly (sometimes £40) to search computerized records and write a report?

3. The letter following the research was inadequate. In some cases the Centre did not list the sources checked.

4. There seems to be a lack of consistency in terms of charges and services among Centres.

5. The Galway-West Centre provided excellent help.

With the very large number of people of Irish ancestry in many countries, the potential for the Irish Heritage Project is tremendous. Although the Project has no doubt served many satisfied customers, there seems to be lot of dissatisfaction. The Heritage Council has been officially requested to investigate the current situation with respect to genealogy and heraldry and to draw up guidelines for future policy. At its first meeting on 1 February 1997 a decision was made to seek submissions from all interested parties regardless of whether they lived in Ireland or not.

Write to: Anne Brennan, c/o Heritage Council, Rothe House, 16 Parliament Street, Kilkenny, Ireland.

**Kingston Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society Kingston Branch** now has a web site at : <http://post.queensu.ca/~murduckb/kgbrogs.htm>. The area includes the County of Frontenac and the County of Lennox and Addington, roughly

equivalent to the province's old Midland District. The group is engaged in publishing census indices and in transcribing cemetery inscriptions. There is a publications list that contains material of this type, as well as other information useful to anyone researching in this area, or in the nearby areas of Leeds and Grenville, Lanark, Hastings and Prince Edward Counties.

**Aberdeen & N.E. Scotland Family History Society** After reading a couple of messages on the soc.genealogy UK&I newsgroup (Internet) expressing high praise for the Scottish History Shop, I went to the home page for the Aberdeen & Scotland FHS and discovered that the Shop is really a part of this Society. One of the newsgroup messages also made particular mention of the volunteer research services offered, and the projects completed and in progress.

**Specific Locations of Interest.** Aberdeenshire, Banff, Kincardine and Morayshire.

The following is a small part of the information supplied on the Society's homepage and an Internet contact. Address: Aberdeen and North - East of Scotland FHS. 164 King Street, Aberdeen, AB24 5BD Aberdeenshire, Scotland.

Tel: 01224 - 6464323

Fax: 01224 - 639096

E-mail: anesfhs@rsc.co.uk

homepage: <http://www.rsc.co.uk/anesfhs/>

This is the Society members' research centre and genealogical library, plus a very good genealogical bookshop with a postal sales division. A catalogue is available upon request. Please send UK stamps or a few bills to defray postage to your country. Membership costs £10 home or overseas, plus a £2 joining fee. Members get a journal four times a year, and free use of all the facilities. Nonmembers are

charged £2.50 per hour to use the resources.

The Society is systematically recording and publishing all the monumental inscriptions of N.E. Scotland. Some 40 of these have already been published and several others are in draft. All these MI publications have been indexed and the total number of names recorded in the database is approaching 60,000. Other indexing projects include the 1851 and 1861 census for the whole of Banffshire.

Anyone living outside the North-East who requires assistance with research should contact the Research Secretary. No formal research fee is charged but any expenses incurred must be reimbursed. These may include postage, photocopying, fees charged for consulting certain Society holdings, official records (currently min. £10 for 2 hours), and for copies of certificates. A donation for travelling expenses would also be appreciated. They do not carry out the compilation of family trees and reserve the right to refuse research which is too lengthy or over-complicated. The assistance provided is always dependent on the availability of local research volunteers at the time.

After reading the homepage for this Society, I realize I should check other societies in other locations to learn about their publications, new projects, etc. Many societies are indexing such records as censuses and MI's and in all probability have resources I am not aware of. Many societies now have, or are starting, an Internet presence, and of course their journals serve to inform subscribers about their recent acquisitions and the publications for sale.

The Aberdeen and North East of Scotland Family History Society sounds like a winner!

**Battle of Waterloo Soldiers.** The following information was found on the Internet, Feb. 24, newsgroup

soc.genealogy.uk+ireland. Q. Does anyone know whether there exists any record of British soldiers who fought at the Battle of Waterloo — other than the book "Waterloo Roll Call" which was revised ca 1904 and lists officers only? A. The Waterloo Museum has indexed the service records of all the army personnel who fought at the battle. Contact D.P. Saunders, Waterloo Museum, 4 Crow Hill, Broadstairs, Kent CT10 1HN, UK. They levy a small search fee which goes towards the preservation of the battlefield. Well worth it. An SAE/IRC would be appreciated.

I sent a request to the Waterloo Museum three weeks ago, but have not had a reply as yet. According to a family story my ggg grandfather fought in the Battle of Waterloo. It seems a lot of people have heard similar stories about their ancestors and I wonder how many of these stories have any basis in fact. I don't know if I'll get any information, but of course we have to try every lead.

**Calgary Public Library** New genealogy books Sept. 1, 1996 - Mar 31, 1997

- Gibson, Jeremy and Pamela Peskett. Record Offices: How to Find Them. 7th ed. 1996 (929.341 G1B 1996).

- Schaeffer, Christina K The Center: A Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Capital Area. 1996. (929.1072 SCH).

- Surname Index to the Census of Canada, Nova Scotia, Halifax County (excluding Halifax City) 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901 (R929.371622 SUR)

- Surname Index to the Census of Canada, Nova Scotia, Lunenburg County, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901. (R929.371623 SUR)

- Johnson, Daniel F. The Irish Emigrants and Their Vessels Ports of Saint John New Brunswick, Canada 1841 to 1849. 1996 (R 929.37151 JOH)

- Johnson, Keith A and Malcolm R. Sainty. Genealogical Research Direc-

tory, National and International, 1996. (R929.37151 JOH)

• Joseph, Anne. *Heritage of a Patriarch: Canada's First Jewish Settlers and the Continuing Story of These Families in Canada*. 1995. (929.2089924 JOS)

• Monasch, Barbara. *Genealogical Sources in British Columbia*. 1995. (929.1072 MON)

• Merriman, Brenda. *Genealogy in Ontario: Searching the Records*. 3rd ed. 1996 (929.1072 MER)

• Morin, Gail. *Manitoba Scrip*. 1996. (R929.37127 MOR)

• Douglas, Althea. *Here be Dragons! Navigating the Hazards Found in Canadian Family Research*. 1996. (929.1072 DOU)

• Elliott, Bruce S. (ed.). *Men of Upper Canada: Militia Nominal Rolls, 1828 - 1829*. 1995. (929.3713 MEN)

• Gilchrist, Brian and Clifford D. Collier (comp). *Genealogy and Local History to 1900: Bibliography* (CIHM). 1995. (929.1016 GIL)

• *Guide to Family History Research in the Archival Repositories of the United Church of Canada*. 1996 (929.371 GUI)

• Hoffman, Marion. *Genealogical and Local History Books in Print: Family History Volume*. 1996 (R929.1016 HOF 1996)

• Taylor, Ryan. *Books You Need to do Genealogy in Ontario: An Annotated Bibliography*. 1996 (R929.1016 TAY)

• Taylor, Ryan. *Important Genealogical Collections in Ontario Libraries and Archives: A Directory*. 1994. (R929.3713 TAY)

• Reid, Judith Prowse. *Genealogical Research in England's Public Record Office: A Guide for North Americans*. 1996. (929.1072 REI)

Thanks to CATHY MAYHOOD, gene-

alogy specialist at the Public Library for supplying the above genealogy listings new to the Library.

### The Family Records Centre

The Public Record Office (PRO) is the repository of the national archives for England, Wales and the United Kingdom. The main address is: Public Records Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Surrey TW9 4DU Homepage: enquiry.pro.rsd.kew@gtnet.gov.uk The journey by underground from central London to Kew takes about 40 minutes.

The PRO also offers a service for ge-

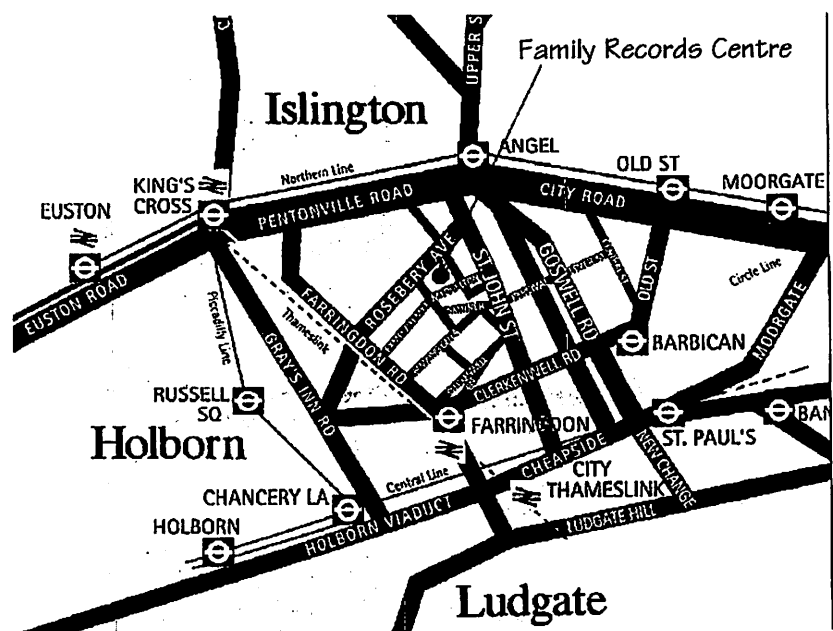
• Indexes of births, marriages and deaths in England and Wales since the 3rd quarter of 1837. \*Indexes of births, marriages and deaths of some British citizens abroad since the late 18th century, including deaths in two World Wars. Note: Certificates can be purchased of any entry in the above indexes.

• Census returns (1841 - 1891).

• Estate Duty Office, death duty registers, 1796 - 1858.

• Estate Duty Office, indexes to death duty registers, 1796 - 1903.

• Prerogative Court of Canterbury: Act



nealogists at the FAMILY RECORDS CENTRE in central London.

Many of you know that St. Catherine's House no longer exists as such, as it has merged with the Chancery Lane branch of the Public Record Office to form the Family Records Centre. This is now based at:

1 Myddleton Street London EC1R 1UW Tel: 0181 392 5300 Web Site: <http://www.open.gov.uk/pro/prohome.htm>

Available records include:

books, administrations, 1559 - 1858 Registered copy wills, 1384 - 1858 Indexes of wills and administrations, paper copies, 1383 - 1858 Non - parochial registers, 1567-1858

• Miscellaneous foreign returns of births, marriages and deaths: indexes 1627 - 1960

The Centre has the following services: —Information point, where family history publications are sold. —Regular users' consultations —Reference area, including books, maps, CD-ROMs and



on-line services (in preparation). — Self-service or staffed photocopying service for census and wills. — Good services for customers with disabilities. — Refreshment area. Note: Monday to Saturday opening plus two evenings a week.

Reports about the new Centre indicate it has larger reading rooms and better furniture and equipment than the previous facilities. One visitor states, "You can work in style at the plush interior that awaits you."

**How to Get There** Take the ANGEL tube (Northern Line, one stop on from King's Cross), as there is no other tube for some distance. The estimated time of the walk from the tube to the Centre varies from 5 - 8 minutes.

The Centre is only a short walk away from the greater London Record Office and the Society of Genealogists, two institutions often visited by genealogists.

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### Conferences

• 3 - 7 Sept 1997 — The 8th British Family History Conference will be held at Askham Bryan College, York. Full conference with residential accommodation and banquet £210 sterling. Daily attendance is £25 per day. Full details available from Mrs. P. Litton, 2 Florence Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 0LD (please enclose an s.a.e.)

• 19 - 21 Sept 1997. A weekend conference, "Genealogy on the Wales-England Border", organized by the University of Wales and the Society of Genealogists, will be held at Gregynog, near Newtown, Powys. Full residential attendance £125 sterling, but other options available. Leaflet available from John and Sheila Rowlands (Greg 97), Dept. of Continuing Education, University of Wales, 10-11 Laura Place, Aberystwith, Ceredigion SY23 2AU.

• 22 - 28 Sept 1997 — The 3rd Irish genealogical conference. Venue — St. Patrick's College in the historic town of Maynooth, Co Kildare. Maynooth is situated 14 miles from Dublin City and is connected to it by motorway and excellent bus and train services. Information about the seminar, including a provisional program, can be found at <http://www.os.qub.ac.uk/nifhs>, or by writing to: 3rd Irish Genealogical Congress, C/O The National Archives, Bishop Street, Dublin 8, Ireland.

• 29 Sept - 3 Oct, 1997 — 7th conference in the Elusive Irish Ancestor series. Contact Shane McAteer, Ulster Historical Foundation, 12 College Square East, Belfast BT1 6DD, Northern Ireland. Tel: +44 1232 332288. Fax: +44 1232 239885.

• 3 (Fri. evening), 4 (all day Sat.) Oct 1997 — AFHS Wild Rose 97 Seminar, Crossroads Hotel, Calgary, AB.

• 2000 — The OGS Seminar will be held in Ottawa and hosted by Ottawa Branch.

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### Fall research trip... Salt Lake City

Seven (7) full days in the Family History Library Accommodation (shared) just a short walk away in the Best Western Salt Plaza.

All inclusive trip for \$750 Cdn which may be less depending on number who go.

This is the 4th Annual trip sponsored by the Retired Employees Association of the Calgary School Board. (Calculus lessons can be arranged) The trip is by chartered luxury motor coach which includes overnight stopovers both ways.

Departure Calgary Saturday, 20 September and return to Calgary September 29th in plenty of time to attend the Wild Rose Seminar.

Call Nancy or Roy Strickland 289-2846 or Roy via e-mail at [stricklr@cadvision.com](mailto:stricklr@cadvision.com) for bookings or additional information.

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The revisions to the Copyright Act has been passed by the House of Commons and the Senate, has been given Royal Assent and so becomes Law.

This 10-year review of this legislation attracted considerable attention because of some far-reaching changes included in the Bill when introduced.

Of particular concern to researchers were severe restrictions which would have been placed on manuscript and other archival material insofar as photocopying was concerned. The vigorous campaign waged by numerous academic and archival associations was instrumental in having these changes modified to the point where there is agreement now that the new act is both realistic and acceptable. Many genealogists and genealogical societies vigorously objected to the draft legislation too and this pressure on the members of parliament and the committee officialdom was certainly helpful in bringing about the amendments.

Many AFHS members filed objections as individuals as did our own Chair on behalf of the Society membership. This is a very pertinent example of how the game of power politics can and must be played. Those who took part are to be commended.

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Ruth Duncan can be reached by e-mail at [rduncan@freenet.calgary.ab.ca](mailto:rduncan@freenet.calgary.ab.ca)

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# Index for volume 17, 1996-97

by Joan Hudson

*Note: Some of the entries are very long and were therefore truncated by the computer...*

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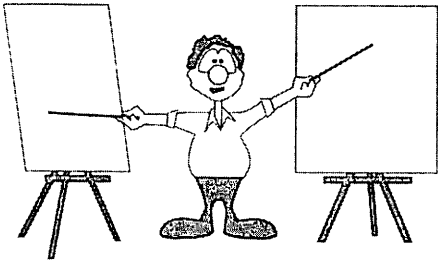
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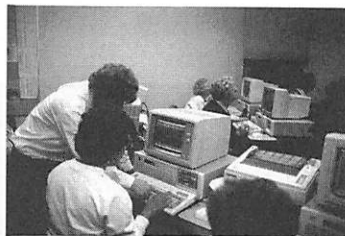
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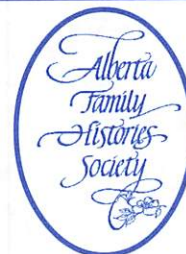
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## Announcement of the New Standard English

The News Standard has received this bulletin fresh from our Brussels-based hack. The European Union commissioners have announced that agreement has been reached to adopt English as the preferred language for European communications, rather than German, which was the other possibility. As part of the negotiations, Her Majesty's Government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a five-year phased plan for what will be known as EuroEnglish.

In the first year, "s" will be used instead of the soft "c". Certainly, sivil servants will resieve this news with joy. Also, the hard "c" will be replaced with "k". Not only will this klear up konfursion, but typewriters kan have one less letter.

There will be growing publik enthusiasm in the sekond year, when the troublesome "ph" will be replaced by

"f". This will make words like "fotograf" 20 per sent shorter.

In the third year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling kan be ekspekted to reach the stage where more komplikated changes are possible. Governments will enkorage the removal of double letters, which have always ben a deterrent to akurate speling. Also, al wil agre that the horrible mes of silent "e"s in the languag is disgrasful, and they would go.

By the fourth year, peopl wil be reseptiv to steps such as replasing "th" by "z" and "w" by "v". During ze fifz year, ze unesesary "o" kan be dropd from vords kontaining "ou", and similar changes vud of kors be aplid to ozer kombinations of leters.

After zis fifz yer, ve vil hav a reli sensibl riten styl. Zer vil be no mor trubls or difikultis and evrivun vil find it ezi tu understand ech ozer. Ze drem vil finali kum tru.

*Note from Chinook's production editor:*

*I just kanot wat until zey cum ut wiz a spel-zeker zat wil kep us al in lin.*

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